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The Editors
WHY MARCH FOR JOBS
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SEPTEMBER 9, 1983

THE CHRISTIAN AS CITIZEN

John A. Coleman

**Clerical backlash in Poland? • Is sex a private matter?
The WCC at Vancouver • Computer culture • Russian reality**

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Correspondence

A choice solution

Erie, Pa.

To the Editors: I'd like to offer a solution to dilemmas like that of Agnes Mary Mansour, the ex-sister of Mercy who now heads the Michigan Dept. of Social Services.

Ms. Mansour's job involves disbursing money to abort the poor. She opposes abortion; she also wants to provide State services equitably. The dilemma: in a State which deems it a "service" to kill the offspring of the poor before birth, how do you provide services "equitably" and at the same time halt (or at least curb) the killing?

Here's my proposal: any pregnant woman who qualifies for aid, should be given a cash grant equal to the cost of an abortion — say, $150 — with no strings attached.

Many women would spend their grant on the downpayment for an apartment; for a trip to distant relatives or friends; for maternity/baby expenses; for a myriad of choices other than abortion.

The State would thus empower women with many more choices; would avoid moral complicity by providing *no* money to abortion operators directly; and would both save lives and enhance the "quality" of those lives.

Who opposes this sort of proposal? Those who have a financial stake in the abortion business; and those who, for reasons of their own, think it would be better simply to abort poor and minority people. Public reaction might lead to some interesting conclusions as to who's "pro-life," who's "pro-choice," and who's truly pro-abortion.

JULI LOESCH

Disown our experience?

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: In response to Madonna Kolbenschlag's article on Sister Mary Mansour, RSM,[June 17] with which I agree, I want to comment from my experience as a Catholic social activist. Having spent eleven years as the director of NETWORK, a Catholic social justice lobby, trying to influence public policy from a justice perspective, I feel angry and betrayed by the Vatican's actions toward Sister Mansour.

The accumulated social justice teachings contained in the encyclicals were and continue to be an inspiring motivation for NETWORK. The clear challenges to transform the world order by confronting unjust political, economic or military systems are particularly evident in the post-Vatican encyclicals. So those of us who took these challenges seriously, and in many cases made work and living choices in order to respond fully, feel particularly upset by the Vatican's attitude toward Sister Mansour and earlier toward Father Robert Drinan, S.J.

It seems ironic that we have to be in conflict with the institutional church in order to work for justice through politics when the teachings of that same institutional church were part of the original motivation. Why do we have to use precious energies fighting for our right to make ministerial choices based on the world's needs, our own talents and the mutual reflection within our religious congregations?

Observing women religious in local and state politics and serving on boards and commissions it is clear that a strong community support is essential in order to keep on struggling for justice in the midst of overpowering forces and constant defeats. But the Vatican's recent actions make membership in a religious congregation a jeopardy.

This strikes me as yet another form of Roman domination which seems not to respect the particular experience of the U.S. local church and the U.S. political realities such as the various levels of the system, the pluralism, the competing interests, and the citizen's role. There seems minimal acceptance of the collective and lived experience of U.S. women religious or their participative and collegial manner of decision-making processes. Much of the re-evaluation and experimentation in religious life which led women religious to choose various ways in which to serve came from the challenge in *Ecclesiam Suam* in the '60s; and now are we expected to disown the results of our experiences? As adult women we have looked sorrowfully and critically at structures which oppress and are currently engaged in trying to change them. Involvement in politics on many levels is one of the ways and thus we are angered at situations which dictate — "stop serving in this way or leave your religious congregation."

When John Paul II spoke at the United Nations in 1979 on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights he defended "the right to political participation and the right to participate in the free choice of the political system of the people to which one belongs." Are U.S. religious women and men to be denied these same rights?

CAROL COSTON, O.P.
NETWORK Board

Malcontents?

Rochester, N.Y.

To the Editors: There was a time when your publication could be counted on to provide balanced coverage of topical ecclesial issues. Your recent lead article on Sister Mansour is an intellectual and theological travesty, to say nothing of imbalance [June 17].

Sister Kolbenschlag, for all her feminist, anti-papal rhetoric, failed to confide to your readership that the entire Mansour episode was no doubt willfully and pre-meditatedly fomented by the more militant members of her order in collusion with a coterie of sympathizers

(Continued on page 475)

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THE SCANDAL OF UNEMPLOYMENT

INFLATION TOUCHES everybody's pocketbook, though its impact is often moderate. Unemployment, even in a depression, hits only a minority, but its impact is frequently disastrous. This asymmetry has led to a bit of untested political lore: that it is not the absolute amount of unemployment which frightens the vast majority of people but whether or not the *rate* of unemployment is on the rise. If the rate is going up, then a large number of workers (who are, after all, still employed) fear that they might be next, with all the terrible effects that joblessness can mean. If the rate is going down, or even holding steady, they relax, and judge their economic circumstances by the lesser but always directly experienced matter of inflation.

If that bit of political savvy holds true, there is a real danger Americans will grow complacent about what remains, even as economic recovery at last gets underway, an unprecedented rate of joblessness. It is bad enough that the official rate of over nine percent more than doubles what in the sixties was *conservatively* considered an unacceptable degree of unemployment. It is worse that the economic consensus seems to be that unemployment will not fall below eight percent even at the height of the recovery. And beyond those figures, of course, are the millions of additional Americans who have abandoned the search for work altogether or who want — and need — full-time employment but have settled for part-time jobs.

The economy may recover, but too many of the people behind those statistics will not. Crushed hopes, self-reproach, strained and broken marriages, alcoholism, mental collapse, child abuse, suicide — the gamut of costs runs from the sapping of spirit and morale to the most dramatic incidents of crime and destruction. Will the more fortunate majority resign themselves to this kind of human waste? That we must not is one of the messages of the August 27 march on Washington commemorating Martin Luther King, Jr.'s call to the nation two decades ago. It is one of the messages of the labor movement's Solidarity Day III parades on Labor Day. It is the message of the United States Catholic Conference's Labor Day statement, issued by Bishop Mark J. Hurley, chairman of the conference's Committee on Social Development and World Peace.

"Work is of supreme importance," Bishop Hurley reminds us in repeating the key thoughts of the pope's encyclical *On Human Labor*, "precisely because it is through labor that human beings realize their humanity." What then are we to make of what Hurley describes as the growing assumption "that high rates of unemployment are a necessary element of our modern economy and that full employment is not a realistic goal?" Such a view, he warns, raises "important questions not only about the current economic policies that are being pursued but also about the long-term status of the American economy."

There are, as usual, ways of evading the problem. One can emphasize the number of new jobs our economy has produced in the last decade, conveniently forgetting

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how many of them, even in the high-technology area, are low-paying and with little security. (Ron Bricker, the unemployed steelworker who got national TV attention when he handed President Reagan his resumé during the president's tour of a Pittsburgh training center, quickly obtained a "hi-tech" job with White House help — it paid less than he received from unemployment compensation and half his previous salary!) In *Dangerous Currents*, a detailed critique of current economic theory, Lester C. Thurow shows how economists have consistently defined the sticky reality of unemployment out of existence. In technical terms, Thurow demonstrates what the popes have been preaching in moral terms: labor is not just another commodity that can be bought and sold by the laws applying to coal or pork bellies. Theories and policies that believe it is are destined to go awry, both morally and practically.

Solutions for persistent high unemployment will not be easy to come by. Probably they won't be devised if we simply stick with all the tried-and-true dogmas that have got us where we are. And certainly they won't be devised if we ignore the problem altogether — which the marchers, among others, are rightly determined to prevent.

HUNGER PAINS

If President Reagan is not off and running hard for a second term you sure could have fooled us. Efforts to reshape his image into one of a man of compassion go on apace. Sometimes good reporting makes nonsense of the White House efforts. Side by side on the front page of one day's *New York Times*, for example, were two stories, one from Atlanta, one from Washington. The piece from Atlanta reported a speech by Mr. Reagan in which he strongly defended his policies on education, minorities, and women's rights, calling criticism "hogwash" and asserting that his administration had achieved an unparalleled record in these areas. Right next to that article was a report from Washington, this one detailing still more Reagan administration plans to cut back government programs that promote school desegregation and educational opportunities for women. Hogwash indeed. If the press insists on reporting facts like these, it's no wonder that Mr. Reagan and his spokesmen insist the media are biased against them.

We are sure we haven't seen the last of the efforts to create a new Reagan image, though. The effort in that direction that most intrigues us at the moment focuses on the issue of hunger in America. Mr. Reagan is, the White House says, "perplexed" and "deeply concerned" about reports that hunger is widespread in this country. As the *Washington Post* noted editorially, the president has good reason to be "deeply concerned," but why should he be "perplexed"? Mr. Reagan has consistently attacked the nation's food programs ever since he took office. He has fought inflation by unemployment, and Reaganomics gave us the worst recession since 1929. We are lucky things are not worse. Under the president's budget proposals for fiscal 1984, 62 percent of all families that use food stamps would have had their benefits cut. Most of this loss would have been borne by households with gross incomes below the poverty line, which was $9,862 for a family of four last year. We'd like to see Secretary of Agriculture Block and his family live on that for a year. Food stamps costs have increased, which is largely due to increased food costs and the fact that people who have lost income because of Reagan cuts in welfare and other programs are entitled to more food stamps. Everyone from the mayors of America's big cities to the dedicated soup kitchen workers around the country report that hunger is widespread and serious, and that hunger would be even worse if Congress had acquiesced in all of Mr. Reagan's food-slashing proposals. As it was, last year 2700 schools had to drop out of the school lunch program, most of them because of new Reagan-inspired rules. How many hungry children does that add up to? Did Mr. Reagan miss the fact that 34.4 million people are now below the poverty line, 15 percent of the population and the highest number in the last seventeen years?

In any case, the president says he is perplexed, and he is therefore appointing a study group to probe the hunger situation. There is probably no harm in this; a good report by a study commission might wake people up — although a good case can be made that the need is clear enough already and that what is needed now is vigorous action. But a serious study can do no harm and might do some good, even if it only educated the administration. What we are concerned about is the makeup of the commission. Let's hope it does not consist entirely of people just as perplexed about the subject as Mr. Reagan. Given the Reagan track record on selecting the big majority of his Central American commission, it just might.

Sixth Assembly of the WCC

MORE THAN POLITICS

THE ELEPHANT & THE TENT

THOSE WHO KNOW the World Council of Churches primarily through U.S. media like *Time* or "60 Minutes" may think of it as a relentlessly left-wing political organization. They would have undoubtedly been astonished if they had been dropped down on the campus of the University of British Columbia in late July or early August. There, at the WCC's Sixth Assembly, they would have come across about 4500 people from around the world who indeed sat earnestly in meetings much of the day and discussed a variety of the world's problems but who also seemed to spend quite a lot of time in a large yellow-and-white-striped tent engaged in, would you believe, worship.

The extent to which worship became the center of the Assembly was probably a surprise even to its organizers. Part of this emphasis was certainly serendipitous; the mere fact that the place of worship was central, and yet separate in the

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LET'S ADMIT WHAT WE WANT FROM SCHOOLS

THOUGHTS FROM THE TRENCHES

THERE IS carnage on the highways; schools then teach driver education. Blacks and whites don't love each other; the schools become the exclusive integraters of society. Nutrition is a problem in affluent America; the schools serve lunch, and then breakfast, and perhaps soon we'll announce "Guess who is coming to dinner?" Public health agencies despair of bringing Dr. Salk's blessings to the young; the schools get into the immunization business. Communities worry about the recreational needs of young people; the schools become all-day community centers. Drug and alcohol abuse rates soar; the schools become addicted to anti-addiction programs. Venereal disease and teenage pregnancy — why not more sex education?

"Meeting all the needs of all the children all the time" seems to be the watchword of American schools as they are forced to become, in the absence of other institutions and organizations, the omni-purpose youth-serving agency of our society. Not the Little Red Schoolhouse but an ever expanding Multi-Purpose Service Center is the more appropriate modern image for the American school.

When I was a young graduate student in the 1950s, writers like Columbia's Dean Barzun and Admiral Rickover more than implied that the expansionist role of the schools was a premeditated plot on the part of pedagogues to take over, in a totalitarian sense, the lives of those they served. One writer saw "educationists" as "octopuses" extending their tentacles to every area of the young person's life. Only a "separationist" Supreme Court kept the schools out of the religious life of children; however, writers like Episcopalian Dean Bell and Jesuit Virgil Blum felt that the alleged neutralism of the schools actually masked a sectarian religion of secular humanism or Ethical Culture.

My own belief is that American educational history will demonstrate that the schools expanded not like an octopus but like topsie who "just growed and growed." Local and federal authorities kept assigning additional tasks, often to school systems unwilling and ill prepared to accept. Rather than eagerly reaching out like an octopus, many educators feared their schools were taking on the characteristics of the dinosaur. The more weight the school took on in its body, the smaller a head it would evolve; and the less emphasis would be given to the task of developing the mind. If the school did everything, could it do well its specific job of enhancing human intelligence?

When I was a young college teacher of education, I often provoked debate among my students on whether or not the schools *should* assume more non-academic roles. Today, as an overwhelmed school administrator, I find such a debate irrelevant. If the school doesn't immunize, feed, bring the races together, or do for young people the host of other jobs to be done, who will do them? As a professional youth server, can I say "no" and risk children being exposed to disease, malnutrition, or abuse? In my school district, the police and fire departments are the only other agencies visible and readily available to serve. The public welfare agencies, since they have been computerized, are rarely seen.

The question then becomes not *should* but *how* can the schools perform all their tasks and still give preeminence to the role of imparting academic skills in an age when the number and dimensions of those skills have expanded. As we feed, integrate, immunize, and protect youths, we still realize that the indispensable intellectual mission cannot be neglected, reduced, or absorbed.

The multi-service school requires increased funding to meet its additional obligations. A firm commitment to systematic, regular in-service teacher training must be given as knowledge and the various sciences expand and become more intricate. We must reorganize our large plants, adding new school administrative positions, and thereby enabling principals to be principal *teachers* supervising instruction and instructors rather than serving as managers of complex enterprises ranging from food service to finance, from security to social service, from transportation to toxification, from immunization to integration, and from recreation to rehabilitation.

None of these initial common-sense reforms are possible unless the American public first realizes how it (and not some educators' cabal) has mandated more and new tasks for schools, not in a planned and developed strategy but usually in a racing response to crises. Only when American taxpayers acknowledge the modern school as the all-purpose youth service center *they* have created by federal and state legislation, by court decisions, and by local school-board policies, and only after they have buried (with honor and gratitude) the anachronistic image of the little old schoolhouse — destroyed as much by increased public expectations as by the demands of modern science and curriculum — then only will our citizenry be ready and willing to give the schools the financial support, the public esteem, and the enduring encouragement required so that we won't be overwhelmed by the many-faceted endeavors now defined as schooling.

FRANK C. ARRICALE, II

(Frank C. Arricale, II, is the community superintendent for a Brooklyn district of New York City schools.)

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distinctive tent, served to make the services visible. Beyond this, however, the extent and variety of the worship pointed to the present state of the ecumenical movement.

While the Council's Program to Combat Racism was getting all the attention, the theologians in the Faith and Order Commission were laboring quietly away as they have been for many years. Last year at Lima, Peru, they came up with a document on Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry which was unanimously passed with no abstentions and sent on to the member churches for their "reception." Since the Roman Catholic church is a full participant in Faith and Order (as are the Eastern Orthodox churches), the implications here are potentially huge. Rome, for example, has sent the document out to all its episcopal conferences, to theologians, and to each diocese with a request for study and discussion, and it is said that the statement has been given the widest circulation of any document since Vatican II.

Since the WCC's Nairobi Assembly of 1975, a group within the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism which had both Roman Catholic and Protestant Evangelical membership produced a paper on "Mission and Evangelism: An Ecumenical Affirmation." It, too, has received wide attention across the ecumenical spectrum. A Roman Catholic staff member for the Commission is expected to be named by the Vatican soon.

The Vancouver Assembly was not asked to vote on either of these documents, since they are matters for the churches and the Assembly can legislate only for the Council itself. But the mere fact of such progress was bound to have an impact.

Part of this impact was shown in the broad Roman Catholic participation in the Assembly, probably the widest Catholic representation in any of the WCC's six world gatherings. This does not mean simply the official "delegated observers," who remained at about the same number (approximately twenty), or the official greetings from Pope John Paul II, which were warm but no breakthrough. (Papal interest in the proceedings was reportedly underscored by the fact that the pope personally added a Polish woman close to Solidarity to the observers list. She was eventually not granted a visa to attend, although the ostensible reason for her absence was illness.)

Less official participation was broad. Catholics served on the local planning committee; Catholic seminarians attended special programs run in conjunction with the Assembly; Catholics worked on the Assembly staff; Catholics had a role in the worship services held by local parishes. (The evening worship services in the tent were planned by local churches.) Part of this reflects the Canadian scene, where ecumenical working together is notably more relaxed than in the United States. The Canadians, for their opening ceremony (televised live across the nation and replete with the governor-general), invited Roman Catholic layman Jean Vanier to give the main address.

Probably the most dramatic example of the complicated RC-WCC relationship appeared during the eucharist, which was based on the Lima text and celebrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury. The assisting ministers were a Danish Lutheran woman, a Baptist from Hungary, a Methodist from Benin, a Moravian from Jamaica, a Reformed minister from Indonesia (also a woman), and a United Church minister from Canada. Russian Orthodox Archbishop Kyril offered the prayer and one of the Scripture readings was given by Roman Catholic Bishop Paul-Werner Scheele of West Germany. In accordance with current ecumenical norms, neither Archbishop Kyril nor Bishop Scheele participated in the communion portion of the service. Nonetheless, it was clearly evident that a great many Roman Catholics in the congregation did receive communion. To viewers in the national Canadian TV audience, excepting of course the ecumenical experts, the distinctions must have been invisible.

ALL OF WHICH raised in many minds the recurring question of Roman Catholic membership in the World Council. It has been agreed for some years on both sides that this is not a wise idea. The WCC has no world communions among its members but rather national churches from various countries. It might be a possibility for various episcopal conferences to join (as they have joined National Councils of Churches in some places). Even here, however, the question of size causes problems. As Paulist Father Thomas Stransky pointed out in Vancouver, the Central Committee of the WCC would be fifty-five percent Roman Catholic. "Nobody," he said, "wants that elephant in the garden."

In addition, some observers claim to detect greater interest by John Paul II in relations with the Eastern Orthodox than with Anglicans and Protestants. Stransky feels that this is a matter of background. "He is the first pope in centuries who is not from the West but comes from the Slavic tradition. Thus he has more experience with the Orthodox. Because he is less familiar with Western Protestantism does not mean dialogue with Protestants will be put in second place." The pope's visit to WCC headquarters in Geneva, postponed because of the assassination attempt on him, has now been rescheduled.

This comment about background and interest points to another strain within the World Council, between a Western interest in church unity and a third-world emphasis on social questions. It was very apparent at Vancouver that the personal heroes of the participants were Allan Boesak and Bishop Desmond Tutu, both leaders against apartheid in South Africa. Darlene Keju-Johnson of the Marshall Islands, a victim of radiation sickness, made a strong impact as she talked about the effects of nuclear testing in the Pacific.

No one would deny the importance of both these emphases in any Council of Churches worthy of the name. The trick is truly to meld the two strains so that they become mutually reinforcing rather than parallel tracks which might split apart. This is not an easy task.

Differences of perception even on social issues were apparent in Vancouver. The current Western liberal emphasis on nuclear disarmament is regarded with suspicion and some incomprehension by many in the third world. This was vividly illustrated at a press conference following plenary session speeches by Helen Caldicott and Park Hyung Kyu. Caldicott, the tireless campaigner against nuclear weapons, had said that "the simple scientific and medical truth is that man can no

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longer fight. We have opened Pandora's box, thus relegating war to one of the anachronisms of history." Park, a Korean Presbyterian pastor who has spent time in jail for opposing his nation's military regime, had said flatly that "injustice is worse than war." Asked to comment on each other's statements, Caldicott said Park's statement was "pre-nuclear thinking" while he reaffirmed his position. Boesak, who is well aware of both positions, spoke of the "concern of many Christians in the third world that the issue of peace will be separated from the issue of justice, making of 'peace' primarily a North Atlantic concern."

The Assembly certainly worked hard to hold all these elements together. In this it was both helped and hampered by the pressure of time and the fact that eighty percent of the delegates were attending their first assembly. The World Council, always worried about becoming simply a self-perpetuating clique of clergy and denominational bureaucrats, has been working hard to increase the percentage of women and youth at the Assembly. About half of the speakers at the plenary sessions were women and there was a lively women's center called "The Well" which ran programs throughout the meeting.

All of this led General Secretary Philip Potter to hail Vancouver as "the people's assembly," but the fact remained that many of the papers produced by the eight issue groups were mediocre and that the resolutions on public issues could have been better drafted. This is where some Protestants yearned for a little Roman Catholic intellectual rigor. "Of course," as one Catholic remarked, "it would have taken us four years to produce the drafts." Still, it is hard to imagine future generations turning to these documents for guidance.

The public statements seem to be all that much of the U.S. and Western press (with honorable exceptions and with the important proviso that this myopia is more common among management than reporters) regard as real events at church gatherings. In fact, such gatherings have a different set of dynamics. The World Council insists that it is not a church version of Amnesty International but represents the will and desires of its member churches. Thus, where churches are critical of their own governments, so is the World Council. Where they are not so critical, neither by and large is the World Council. An example of the first position is the Vancouver statement on Central America, fiery in its denunciation of the U.S. and in its praise of the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua; an example of the second is the statement on Afghanistan, a carefully worded diplomatic brief backing the UN Secretary General. Where one side of a dispute is not represented and the other is present will lead to something like the Middle East statement. Biblical prophecy it may not be, but this is how international organizations tend to function.

By and large, Vancouver was a good assembly. Most satisfying and most exciting as always was to see the world Christian community gathered together in all its variety, even if only a tiny sample was present. No wonder the prayers and the hymns shook the poles of that tent and no wonder that the Roman Catholic elephant had at least an exploratory trunk inside.

ARTHUR J. MOORE

(Arthur J. Moore, editor of the United Methodist Church's New World Outlook, *has attended the five WCC Assemblies since the Evanston meeting in 1954.)*

Of several minds: *John Garvey*

CHRISTIANITY & POWER

WAS JESUS A REALIST?

JESUS SAID a number of things about power and powerlessness. In Luke's account of the temptation of Jesus, Satan tells Jesus that power over all of the kingdoms of the world has been given into his hands, and Jesus refused to pay Satan homage in order to receive power. When James and John show a desire for power in the kingdom they believe Jesus will establish, he tells them "You know that in the world, rulers lord it over their subjects, and their great men make them feel the weight of authority; but it shall not be so with you. Among you, whoever wants to be great must be your servant, and whoever would be first must be the willing slave of all — like the Son of Man; he did not come to be served, but to serve, and to surrender his life as a ransom for many."

The theme of becoming great by becoming least recurs throughout the Gospels, and it is connected with compassion and forgiveness. "Whatever you do to the least of these, you do to me . . . Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who persecute you . . . You will not be forgiven unless you forgive your brother from the bottom of your heart."

These statements of Jesus move us; they convince us that he was a special sort of person, uniquely compassionate. We regard these words with reverence, as we should; we would resent it if someone were to scorn them. But we do not take them straight, as instructions aimed at us. Or we accept them as a kind of unkept promise: someday we will know what it means to love our enemies, to serve rather than to be served, to forgive from the bottom of our hearts. At present we regard these counsels as incapable of fulfillment, as if Jesus were less than realistic.

Can families, businesses, or governments be run on Christian principles? For example, can a society regard a Charles Manson as one of the least of the brethren? Can a society regard someone outside the borders of the state which claims to represent society as a brother or sister, someone I must die for if necessary, but never kill? And if the state finds it neces-

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sary to kill either the criminal within or the enemy without, isn't that command of the state and its acceptance by Christians a confession that Jesus's words are not adequate to all situations, that they are limited in application, smaller than the fullness of human being?

One response to the words of Christ involves an interior change. We are told that we must not bear the napalmed child any malice, or enjoy the spectacle of the dying criminal, or delight in the killing of the enemy conscript. This approach allows us to feel Christian, while assuring the inefficacy of Jesus's teaching at any level other than an emotional or esthetic one. If, however, Jesus's words demand a change which will not allow us to kill the criminal or the enemy, the basis of much of our political life is shaken.

The question of Christianity's relationship to power was clearly a problem from the beginning. Although it would be an oversimplification to say that the early church was pacifist, it would be a much greater oversimplification to deny it. Christian allegiance to the state was heavily qualified, and killing, whether in war or for reasons of state, was discouraged where it was not grounds for excommunication.

The relationship of Christianity to power is more complicated than one would think, looking at much of the current comment on the relations between church and state in places as different as Poland, the United States, El Salvador, and the Philippines. Most commentators assume that the church is doing a good thing (if the church supports the sort of power the commentator likes), a bad thing (if it does not), or a forbidden thing (if the commentator is the sort who thinks that religion must never have any effect at all other than an emotional one, on those who happen to be attending a religious service).

What is not often considered in this context is the fact that Christianity is about the thorough transformation of the human being, a transformation which happens at the collective level as well as the individual level. This transformation is brought about by God, not by any institution. It is made possible by an openness to the work of God in us, an openness which trusts that God's working is a real thing, not a metaphor for the ethics of the believer but the source of that ethics, a source which the believer must always realize that he does not himself possess and cannot manipulate.

Christianity is not unique in having accepted the patronage and protection of the rich and powerful. But because the words of Christ challenge conventional views of authority the problem is particularly pointed in Christian history. Many of the indictments that have been brought against the church have involved the manifestations of Christianity as a kind of power. The list is ugly and familiar: we have all heard of the Crusades and the Inquisition, the persecution of Jews, the genocidal crusade of Cromwell in Ireland, countless conversions at swordpoint, the forced conversion of Orthodox to Catholicism under the treaty of Brest-Litovsk, and the more recent forced conversion of Eastern-rite Catholics to Orthodoxy under Soviet sponsorship — no one, Catholic, Protestant, or Orthodox, mainstream churchman or Anabaptist, gets off untainted. And the problem is an ancient one: the first ecumenical council (if you except the council of Jerusalem) was convened not by a pope or by bishops, but by the authority of the emperor, whose influence was, if not decisive, nevertheless felt. Important doctrinal formulations involved not only Christian dogma but also national and regional allegiances, imperial and anti-imperial politics.

Christians have accepted, with varying degrees of ease, forms of authority which are, in practice, everything Jesus said his followers were not to be. If we believe that it is the might of the state which protects us, if we believe that we must rely on force, our claim to trust God is to at least a certain extent a sentimentality. This is not our only form of idolatry; the need for financial security is another. And no one is completely free of idolatry; even voluntary poverty and nonviolence can become idols, particularly when we believe that we possess them as virtues. But our willingness to accept power and the allegiances which demand the use of force against other human beings has been the source of more misery in our time than anything else. Faced with it we feel a certain helplessness, as if there were simply no alternative to choosing one violent side over another. There is nothing hypocritical about the claims many of us make to be Christian while at the same time we feel the need to accept violence as a tragic necessity; this is a genuine difficulty for many people, we experience it as an agony which has no alternative. But how limited is this point of view?

I read recently of an Aztec sacrifice, made to appeal to the rain God. A child would be selected and taken to the edge of a river and beaten until it began to weep. The adults, moved by the child's suffering, wept too, and their weeping would turn to mourning as the child was drowned by someone sacred; this was a necessary horror, a sacrifice involving real tears and real tragedy. The tears were all genuine, no doubt, and the ones which were not probably felt to those who forced themselves to shed tears the way our own false tears do: we know we should feel what we do not feel.

We are horrified by the thought of deliberate human sacrifice, the picture of the heart torn out and still bleeding in the hand of the Aztec priest. It horrifies us in a way which Hiroshima does not. Our horror may be greater where limited ritual death is concerned because, unlike the death of hundreds of thousands of people killed for strategic reasons, death on an altar suggests a demand by God for blood. A divine demand for blood horrifies us. A governmental demand for blood, on the other hand, does not. I have a strong feeling that a sensitive Aztec observer felt keenly both the necessity of ritual murder, and the profound sadness which accompanies the knowledge that the world simply couldn't exist in any other way. The Aztecs might have felt that they were participants in a nightmare from which there was no awakening. We believe that the nightmarish quality of their ritual consists in believing it to have been necessary. We will have made some progress when our own situation appears as nightmarish to us, and our own vision as narrow and unnecessarily murderous as theirs was.

JOHN GARVEY

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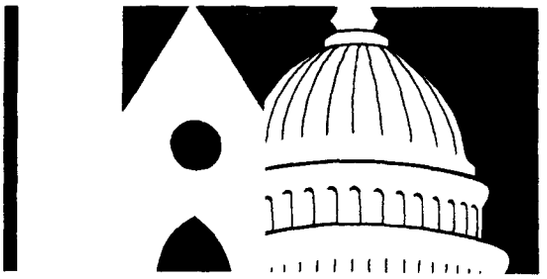

The Christian as citizen

JOHN A. COLEMAN

"The little man is acting like the big oil companies now: I'll get mine and screw you."
John Updike, *Rabbit is Rich*

I AM STILL under the spell of a conversation I had in December of 1982 in Washington, D.C. with a friend who recounted a request he had received from a progressive Democratic senator who had recently been re-elected in a close campaign. The senator complained that the arsenal of monies which financed his opposition was amassed from narrow-visioned, single-interest Political Action Committees. Ruefully, he acknowledged that his own campaign funds were derived from a consortium of similarly narrow-interest lobbies. "Who" — the senator asked plaintively — "speaks in America for the broader public interest?" He asked my friend for some classic work which might articulate the importance for democracy of citizens who could forsake their own interest, at least at times, to seek a more inclusive good. I suggested that he could do worse than re-read Alexis de Tocqueville's two-volume classic, *Democracy in America*.

The senator's lament can situate the urgency and genuine importance of raising the question of the relation between Christianity and citizenship. Tocqueville, theorist of religion and society, statesman and — appropriately labeled as such by a major commentator — "Christian moralist," will serve us as a guide for our reflection on this question.

Last year, the political journalist, Richard Reeves, published a book, *American Journey*, in which he retraces the travels of Tocqueville and raises anew his earlier question about democratic citizenship in America. Reeves paints a disquieting picture of where we have come as a nation since the 1830s. He avers that "the nation I saw no longer shared the view that public religion was necessary for the survival of republican institutions." Psychology has replaced religion, yielding a therapeutic society which does not know how to produce Tocqueville's "blind sacrifice and instinctive public virtues." In its stead our people pursue self-fulfillment, getting ahead and moving on, the gratification of their immediate desires and needs. In one of his chapter headings, Reeves sums up this transition to a therapeutic-technological society in the catch phrase, "From Puritan Republic to Selfish Democracy." He cites with alarm Daniel Yankelovich's survey data which suggest that "we see the beginnings of an ethic built around the concept of duty to oneself in glaring contrast to the traditional ethic of obligation to others."

Throughout his *American Journey*, Reeves encounters the embodiment of the great Frenchman's worst fears for a commercial democracy: the rise of an industrial and military aristocracy with few checks on that "breathless cupidity" Tocqueville saw latent in America; the emergence of administrative governmental centralization; the breakdown of old values and habits of the heart and their replacement by laws, rules and guards. No reader of Reeves's thoughtful commentary could avoid asking with the senator: who speaks now in America for the public interest? What kind of citizen would we need to stem this tide of self-interest, if stem it we can?

I would argue three fundamental theses about the relation between Christianity and citizenship. My first proposition is that Christianity has not adequately adumbrated or embodied the moral ideal of the citizen in its social ethics or popular preaching. We lack a coherent developed Christian theory of citizenship. The second thesis maintains that Christianity has a positive contribution to make to the classic ideal of the active and critical citizen. Its contribution will come from a penetrating understanding of Toqueville's famous dictum that religion — although it rightly takes no part directly in government and properly keeps clear of partisan entanglements — is the first and most important of our *political* institutions. My third and final contention will be that the ideal of citizenship has rightful autonomy as a moral goal in such wise that it, in turn, mediates and shapes the appropriate public engagement of Christians as

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citizens and the fitting response of the churches to public participation and life.

THESIS #1: *Christianity lacks an adequate moral ideal of citizenship.* In his book, *The Machiavellian Moment,* J.G. Pocock remarks that the saints always feel some unease in the earthly Jerusalem. They wear their mantle of citizenship with some ambiguity. It is undeniable that there is a possible and perennial tension between Christianity and citizenship. The lack of complete fit between religion and politics flows from several fears on the part of Christians. First, there is a legitimate distrust and distancing from the demonic charismatic potential inherent in politics. All too easily politics can displace religion or become an alternative civic idolatry. Again, there are well-founded fears of narrow patriotism, uncritical nationalism, and the collapse of Christianity into particular cultural forms, with a concomitant loss of both the transcendent reference to the Lord and Judge of all nations, including our own, and of that universality of community which must typify a catholic sensibility of the whole of humanity as, in some sense, the body of Christ. This latter founds a solidarity in faith and love with brothers and sisters not of our native blood, culture, economic or political system.

However real the dangers of an overly and uncritically enthusiastic citizenship might be, I want to attend, in a hermeneutic of suspicion of our own behavior, primarily to that persistent litany of criticism voiced by critics of Christianity from Roman times, through its classic statement by Machiavelli and Jean Jacques Rousseau down to more recent critics such as Albert Camus and Hannah Arendt. Their complaint has been that Christianity has not been conducive to good citizenship.

For some of these critics, Christians are suspect on issues relating to the temporal order because of their otherworldliness. The preoccupation of Christians with a Jerusalem on high tempers their energies for the struggle for rough justice, liberty and dignity in the *polis* here below. Others note that throughout history the ordinary exegeses of Romans 13 and similar New Testament passages make a case for at best a dutiful citizenship, lacking enthusiastic commitments and autonomous initiative in the role. Passive obedience but not active engagement becomes the ideal. Still others, following Rousseau, feel that Christians subscribe, in their theory at least, too much to the Stoic ideal of universal citizenship, espousing allegiance to the abstraction of the whole of humanity but showing a distinct *apathia* for the struggles of one's own political time, place and home.

Finally, some critics, such as Hannah Arendt, speak of an anti-political bias implied in espousing the impossible ideal of the Sermon on the Mount which can never be the sufficient basis for public and historically contingent societal justice, order, peace and liberty. A proper appreciation of the real, if limited, human good of citizenship in the active shaping of the communal destiny is impossible if Christianity, as Arendt claims, involves "the degradation of politics into a means to obtain an allegedly 'higher end.' " Politics and citizenship can not be subordinated into mere means without losing their intrinsic purposes, excellences and goods.

Alexis de Tocqueville might be the most helpful of such critics because he was so clear about what he had in mind when he accused Christianity of neglecting to delineate the moral ideal of citizenship. Clearly his is not a call for some Erastian political religion manipulated for the purposes of the regime. He championed the separation of church and state and admired a free Catholicism wherever he found it. He had seen too close at hand the awful prostitution of religion in successive alliances of the altar and throne in the *Ancien Régime*, the First Empire, the Bourbon restoration and, most galling to him, under Louis Napoleon. Indeed, he attributed the resurgence of religion in France under the July monarchy precisely to the severing of connections between religion and regime.

In a ringing speech to the Chamber of Deputies in France in 1844 Tocqueville warned his compatriots of "the most detestable of all human institutions, a political religion, serving the government and helping to oppress men instead of preparing them for freedom." For the good of both the government and the church, he rejoiced that in America religion and its ministers exercised only an indirect influence over politics.

Yet in two long correspondences, one with Arthur de Gobineau, his former research assistant and chef de cabinet when Tocqueville was foreign minister of France, the other with Mme. Sophie Swetchine, a presider over a leading Paris salon, Tocqueville lays bare his complaint against Christianity for neglecting attention to the moral duty of citizenship. He frequently objected, in his classic, *L'Ancien Régime,* and elsewhere, that the French clergy fell back on an emphasis on purely private morality, the virtues of private honesty and decorum in everyday life and family, as its main moral message. As he put it in a letter to Gobineau, "Because the French clergy emphasizes only private morality the nation at large has not been taught the duties of citizenship." To Mme. Swetchine, he specifies what he wanted preached: "I want them to impress upon men's minds that each owes himself first of all to this collective being [in the context of Tocqueville's thought this means society and not primarily the government or the state]; that indifference with respect to this collective being is not permissible, still less making of indifference a kind of flabby virtue which enervates some of the noblest instincts we

Critics from Roman times through Machiavelli and Rousseau and down to Camus and Hannah Arendt have complained that Christianity is not conducive to good citizenship.

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have been given; that each is responsible for what happens to this being, and that each, according to his wisdom is obligated to work continually for its well-being and to care that *it submit only to beneficial, respectable and legitimate authority.*''

I underscore this last phrase to make clear that Tocqueville knew that mere passive obedience to existing authority is not Christian public virtue. The duty of the good Christian citizen is to abate the evils of bad government by any and all means that conscience may suggest. Far from advocating a servile obedience, the French statesman came perilously close to encouraging civil disobedience to the regime of Napoleon III on explicitly religious grounds.

A STRIKING PASSAGE from the correspondence with Gobineau illuminates Tocqueville's twofold complaint that Christianity neglected to define the duties of individuals as citizens and to spell out their obligations to their country and failed, as well, to incorporate the duties of citizenship into the Christian moral code. ''Christianity and consequently its morality went beyond all political powers and nationalities. Its grand achievement is to have formed a human community beyond national societies. The duties of men among themselves as well as their capacity as citizens, the duties of citizens to their fatherland, *in brief, the public virtues,* seem to me to have been inadequately defined and considerably neglected within the moral system of Christianity.'' It should be clear that Tocqueville's main concern was with the demise of public virtues, an eclipse he argued was inevitable if either (1) religion declined or (2) on its part, religion neglected attention to its role in society — its role, it should be noted, *as citizen* rather than as charismatic community or bearer of particular revelation.

That this was neither a call to servile obedience nor a falsely political religion should be clear from the remarks of disdain against the petty bourgeois Christianity — a marriage of hypocrisy and comfort — that began to flourish under Louis Napoleon: ''I am always tempted to shout at them: rather than be Christians of this kind, be pagans with pure conduct, proud of your souls and with clean hands.''

The moral ideal of citizenship is, itself, a contested notion. In a seminal essay, ''The Concept of Citizenship,'' Michael Walzer distinguishes three sources for the grounding of the duty of citizenship. The first is a passive and servile notion of citizenship. Citizens should obey the laws and do their duty to the nation because they are the recipients of benefits only the state can give. In this view, the citizen's duty derives from gratitude for the liberties and other benefits which directly flow from the protection and benevolence of authority.

Walzer lodges three objections to this way of grounding the concept of citizenship. First, ''it tells us nothing about the political and moral dimensions of citizenship.'' His other two objections are quite close to Tocqueville's thought. On the one hand, this way of grounding citizenship provides no protection against a despotic majority. Eternal vigilance of citizens *vis à vis* the state is a necessary means to protect themselves against abuses by their protectors. On the other, the state is meant to be subordinate to society. Therefore, ''the citizen is not primarily bound to the authorities at all but to his fellow citizens.''

The second moral ideal of citizenship is the classic Athenian notion of the active citizen according to which the citizen is duty bound to obey the laws of the polity because he or she had a direct hand in making them. Because of the scale in size and complexity in the modern state, the citizen must delegate to others much of the active role of coordination and determination to a particular of the public good. The ordinary citizen lacks both sufficient expertise and the time to be continuously determining public policy.

Walzer suggests a third grounding for the ideal of citizenship, one close to the Greek notion of the active citizen, shaping and participating in the defining and enacting of law for the common good but more suited to modern societies. He refers to it as a *pluralist* concept of citizenship, a citizenship mediated, as Tocqueville also argued, through associations acting in the public interest. While individual citizens might lack the energy, time or expertise for active involvement on a relatively continuous basis in the affairs of public life, they can invest some of their real time, energy, and expertise, in concert with others through associations, in exercizing active citizenship. Walzer notes two corollaries of this Tocquevillian notion of citizenship through an active associational life. ''All patriots are potential traitors. They are committed to 'business of a public character' but not always to the same piece of business or kind of business as are the authorities.'' The second corollary is that ''citizenship (as a moral choice rather than a legal status) is possible only if there are other groups than the state within the state; and it is fully accepted only by joining other groups along with the state.''

One clear implication of Walzer's Tocquevillian argument here is that, were Christianity to take seriously the duty of active citizenship as part of the Christian moral ideal, it would urge on all church members and not just its spiritual elites what it used to enjoin through its former specialized Catholic action strategy for influencing the public order. Simultaneously with church membership, the Christian as citizen is called to an active engagement in the affairs of the republic by joining and truly participating in at least one association, besides the church, concerned with the public interest. Nothing short of this kind of moral ideal would join the argument of Tocqueville and other critics of Christianity when they complain that Christianity neglects to define the duties of Christians as citizens and incorporate these duties within the Christian moral code.

THESIS *#2: Christianity has a positive contribution to make to the moral ideal of citizenship.* In an important set of essays on the theory of citizenship the political philosopher, D.W. Brogan, raises the question of a distinctively Christian contribution to the moral ideal of citizenship. In dealing in his book, *Citizenship Today*, with the issue of the obligation of French Christians to oppose their government's war in Algeria, Brogan asserts the need for ''the acceptance of the idea that a Christian citizen has more duties than and different

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from those that the state defines and demands." Brogan assumes that Christian citizenship must be more than mere obedience to the existing secular program.

In this context I want to tease out and systematize Tocqueville's argument in *Democracy in America* about the distinctive and positive contribution of Christianity to citizenship. Most people are familiar with the formula of his famous argument which he originally derived from conversation with the Presbyterian minister, Rev. James Richards of Auburn Seminary, during his journey to America. "Liberty cannot be established without morality nor morality without faith." This formula entails much more than the classic utilitarian arguments for religion in society. The key to seeing in depth what this argument means lies in another justly famous passage in *Democracy in America:* "Liberty is the daughter of the *mores* [in French, *les moeurs* and in the felicitous translation of Henry Reeve, "habits of the heart"], rather than of institutions [of government], while habits of the heart derive ultimately from religion."

Tocqueville, the realistic political analyst and Christian moralist, would never allow himself the delusion of dreaming of institutions, laws or social systems so perfect that human beings would no longer have to be good. Instead, something like public spirit, public morality and, most importantly, public virtue are necessary if a republic is to survive. Note that what Tocqueville has in mind is not private virtue exercised in public roles (i.e., don't steal or lie in public office) but public virtue in the sense of culturally central and stably institutionalized habits of character which ground a willingness to care for and sacrifice for the public good. The reason that religion is the first and foremost of our *political* institutions is that only a non-established but also non-privatized religion can institutionalize and engender those steady habits of public concern and public participation that create a free citizenry of the republic. In short, religion is a political institution inasmuch as it produces a certain kind of character necessary for public life.

In a free and pluralistic society, the state cannot be uniquely or primarily entrusted with something so central as the task of forming national character. It will too easily coopt virtues or manipulate them to serve its own ends.

And yet the rich meaning of Tocqueville's claim that religion is the first of our political institutions forces us to delve even deeper. It is possible to see Tocqueville as a great nineteenth century exponent of what has been recently called, "democratic capitalism" — what he himself referred to as a commercial or trading democracy, just as his great contemporary Karl Marx was the master expositor of the socialist idea. But it is important to remember that if Tocqueville accepted this form of polity as provisionally legitimate, he neither celebrated it ideologically nor approached it without profound fears and suspicion. There are dangers lurking in democratic capitalism, dangers, I would note, that Tocqueville thought not merely remotely possible but more likely to prevail; dangers, in his view, which were ingredient *in the very institutional logic* of this form of polity and not just because of the personal moral weaknesses of people who lived under such a form of government. These dangers are enumerated for us on almost every page of *Democracy in America:* greed, envy, an individualism which disintegrates into egoism, the loss of a taste for excellence in the sense of the Greek concept of *arete* as well as the eclipse of public virtue. This litany hardly constitutes a celebration!

Morever, Tocqueville could face with some equanimity, if also with trepidation, the emergence and eventual expansion of this form of modern commercial democracy only if religion existed as a public force to counteract and neutralize the institutional logic ingredient in this form of polity. Thus, in the very first pages of *Democracy in America* he writes that religion is "to purify, to regulate and to restrain the excessive and exclusive taste for wealth" which he noted as a tendency in a commercial democracy.

Seymour Drescher, one of the best secondary commentators on Tocqueville, cites in his book, *Dilemmas of Democracy*, a manuscript draft of *Democracy in America* in which Tocqueville set forth a schema under the rubric, "A commercial people." In one column he lines up under this rubric, three phrases: egoism, cupidity, and pride. In a separate column he juxtaposes the term religion. The marginal note reads, "Religion creates a barrier, it is a brake." Religion is a brake precisely by being counter-cultural to the institutional thrust and logic of commercial democracy, a barrier to the dehumanizing and anti-libertarian tendencies ingredient in modern democratic capitalism. Religion serves as at best a loyal opposition to this form of polity by creating public participants in society with habits of the heart — with characters — antithetical to greed, egotistical individualism, the loss of excellence, and the eclipse of public virtue. Only if religion serves in this way as the first of our political institutions would we avoid the typical product of modernity which Tocqueville characterizes in *L'Ancien Régime* as "self-seekers, practicing a narrow individualism and caring nothing for the public good."

There are other ways in which Christianity has a positive and public contribution to make to citizenship. It can prepare free citizens who will resist the servitude of mass democratic despotism. By its transcendent reference and wider appeal to humanity it can restrain the power of the majority by appealing beyond an unjust or selfish majority to "humanity,

Religion, thought Tocqueville, is a barrier to the dehumanizing and anti-libertarian tendencies ingredient in modern democratic capitalism.

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justice, reason and vested individual rights." Again, it can provide that breadth of vision and community which, according to Tocqueville, democratic society does not characteristically encourage. Finally, with its fine intuition of all of humanity as, in some implicit sense, part of the body of Christ, it can protect against atomized views of the individual. As Tocqueville put it in *Ancien Régime:* "So wrong is it to confound independence with liberty, there is nothing less independent than a free citizen." *A fortiori* there should be nothing less independent than a free Christian citizen.

I would go beyond Tocqueville to cite three other contributions of Christianity to citizenship. Here I will draw on some ideas of Hannah Arendt in her modern classic, *The Human Condition*. Arendt notes two qualities of public action in a situation characterized by a plurality of actors in interaction, none of them totally authors of the consequences, often unforeseen and unintended, of public policy. She notes that in this condition of plurality, entering into and acting in public life has about it a quality that is inevitably irreversible. Public action often has tragic consequences and victims we cannot undo.

Secondly, political action, characterized by a plurality of actors, is unpredictable. Politics remains an art and a risk rather than a science. Arendt suggests, in this context, that Christianity can contribute to the ideal of citizenship both the possibility of forgiveness and of making and keeping promises. The first mitigates, to some extent, the sorrow of the irreversibility of action, the second lessens unpredictability. If forgiveness as a public act, as in Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address or acts of amnesty, does not entirely erase past action, it promises new possibility to a polity beyond mere conflictual recrimination. Forgiveness is premised always on a sense of the innate dignity of the human person. As Arendt puts it, "What was done is forgiven for the sake of *who* did it," a fellow human endowed with dignity. The sin is hated but the sinner, provided he truly repent of his unjustice, is pardoned.

On their part, the Old and New Testament ideals of the Covenant can serve as public, if secularized, models in political life and citizenship of making and keeping promises; a care to make promises in public one only truly intends to keep and to communicate a firm intention toward fidelity to the good of one's fellow citizens. Finally, Christianity can contribute through its foundational symbols of a people gathered together in justice vivid symbols of community so that the classic modern triad of liberty, equality, and community not remain skewed by futile attempts to understand liberty and equality in purely procedural terms without any regard to the quality of vision and life in the community grounded in some commonly embodied habits of the heart.

THESIS #3: *The ideal of citizenship has a rightful autonomy as a moral goal in such a way that it, in turn, legitimately mediates and shapes the appropriate posture of Christians as citizens and the fitting response of the churches as citizens to public participation and life.*

It is my contention that a direct move from Christian ideals and symbols to public action, unmediated by a respect for the autonomous moral ideal of citizenship, is dangerous to our common life. The ideal of citizenship gives direction to the appropriate posture of Christians as citizens and the fitting response of the churches as citizens to public participation and life. One difference between the public church as the first of our *political* institutions in Tocqueville's terms and a divisive sectarianism in public is the acceptance by the first of the moral legitimacy of citizenship as an active idea. In a pluralistic society, this will entail the constitutional or customary separation of church and state. It will entail as well acceptance of civility, pluralism, freedom, and respect for those who dissent from our particularist confessional views. One grounding for a mediated use of "secular warrant" when the Christian and the churches participate and make their case in public life will be rooted in this sense of citizenship and the civility appropriate to it as autonomous moral ideals.

Tocqueville realized full well the difficulty for Christians or churches to learn this lesson of citizenship and civility in a public conversation they do not uniquely control. He despised the self-seeking opportunism of so many of the French Catholic party who used the public order to further their own narrow religious interests at the expense of the public good. Thus in his *Memoirs of the 1848 Revolution,* he disdainfully describes his fellow cabinet member, Falloux, as one who "was only seeking a road through all our revolutions by which he could bring the Catholic religion back to power." He entertained nothing but scorn for Montalembert and the Catholic Party for their self-interest and opportunism in selling out to Napoleon III. In return for the pottage of a promise of Napoleon III to come to the aid of the temporal power of Pius IX and to guarantee the Catholic interest in a separate confessional school system in France, the Catholics remained silent about the destruction of a free press and parliamentary institutions or the eclipse of any habits of the heart which might urge public opposition and voice in the France of the Second Empire.

The alacrity with which the Catholic leaders allied themselves to Napoleon III must have been a particularly bitter pill for one whose principal aim in entering politics, as he wrote to his friend Corcelle in 1843, was to foster the reconciliation of "the liberal spirit and the spirit of religion," a reconciliation that was essential if France was to emerge as a modern democracy. He thought that such self-serving pursuit of narrowly conceived goods, even religious goods, was no different, from the viewpoint of the ideal of citizenship, than the self-seeking pursuit of personal wealth or power. Since he saw that total identification with a private group is always fatal to public life, he took every opportunity to berate his fellow Catholics for behaving as though they were members of a separate group with its own principles, leaders, and interests unrelated to any wider set of principles, leaders, and interests which might link them to their fellow citizens. He knew that in modern societies whatever the theological claims of any of the churches, from the point of view of the wider society a church could only constitute one among many groups.

At times he came close to despairing of the church taking its

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citizen's role seriously. Thus, in his very last unfinished book on the French Revolution he notes, "The clergy always behaves in this fashion. It supports compromises and governments at the same time. When these fail they sing the Te Deum for the new victors."

And yet he knew that if religion does not take its citizenship role seriously not only is the republic in danger — since there is no institutional mooring for a set of habits of the heart which might counteract the vices ingredient in democratic capitalism — but religion itself would lose its vitality and moral authority. For the moral authority of religion to be publicly available to the wider society, it needed, in turn, a society rich in associations, "those large free schools where all the members of the community learn the lesson of association." These associations in the public interest, in turn, are the places where Christians exercise the virtues of citizenship. In them, rather than directly in and through the churches, they make available the presence of Christian citizenship to the polity.

I have used the writings and life of Tocqueville not for antiquarian or purely exegetical purposes but to distill from this student of religion in America a theory of Christian citizenship. I have done so in order to respond to the genuine crisis of citizenship most thoughtful observers of American life have noted. If, as Richard Reeves suggests, we have become a nation which no longer shares the view that a public religion is necessary for the survival of republican institutions, it may be already too late in the day. It will be all the more dangerous if the churches come to share this shallow view.

It is my conviction that we need a revived sense of the public church, neither narrowly and divisively sectarian nor established. I fear that unless the churches are concerned for the common weal of and in concert with all citizens of this republic, we will not be saved as Americans from eventually having to make our own an epitaph for the Ancient Regime which Tocqueville quotes in his classic on that topic: "Our government (and our society) resembles the mass for the dead: there is no gloria (since there is nothing to sing about), no credo (since there is absolutely nothing that we believe in common), a long offertory (where much money is collected) and in the end no benediction."

THE USES OF ANTI-SEMITISM IN POLAND

Clerics & Communists: strange bedfellows

MIECZYSLAW MANELI

THE PILGRIMAGE of John Paul II to Poland evoked a charged political climate from the moment of its announcement. It was unprecedented that millions participate en masse in religious services while simultaneously thinking of God, Caesar, and resistance to the powers that be. But assessments of the immediate and potential results of the pope's trip to Poland remain as controversial as the discussions that had preceded it. It is quite evident, for example, that regardless of any promises the Polish government may have made to John Paul II, real change is still being evaded. The lifting of martial law and granting partial amnesty were accompanied by changes in the Criminal Code which "legalize illegality." But also central to the controversies following the pope's visit is the fate of KOR (Committee for the Defense of the Workers) whose leaders have been jailed. Their trial is in preparation.

The group of Catholic and lay intellectuals who organized KOR is considered especially dangerous by the Communist party and government, not only in Poland but in all other Communist capitals. The party realizes that KOR was able to accomplish the well-nigh impossible by forging an alliance between intellectuals and workers who jointly fought for freedom and democracy. The emergence of Solidarity was a genuine victory for this alliance. Lenin's dream was at long last brought to fruition — to the detriment of Leninism and Communist governments.

To that irony has been added another. During the past months, the party and government's campaign against KOR has been given an ideological assist from most unexpected quarters: traditional Polish right-wing leaders and certain elements of the Catholic church.

Jedrzej Giertych, one of the oldest theorists and the political leader in the West of the Polish Nationalist Party (previously known as Natodowa Demokracjaor) published a pamphlet under the title, *What Is to Be Done? An Open Letter to the Polish Society in Poland* (London, 1982). In it he announced his support for the military dictatorship of General Jaruzelski: "Perhaps some of my readers will not like it, but I openly state that it is good that the coup d'etat of December 13 took place. I am glad that the introduction of the state of war was performed efficiently and almost painlessly" (p. 30). He continues: "The coup of December 13 was not a Soviet political decision.

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Everything indicates that it was a Polish political action. A group of Polish officers found that it was necessary to stop the developing *anarchy* and the *approaching revolution* and made a coup d'etat with the *Polish forces* and in the *Polish interest*'' (p. 31, emphasis added).

It may be, Giertych continued, that the Soviet government ''gave some help to General Jaruzelski,'' but it was minimal and of secondary importance.

The question arises: against whom was the coup directed? Against the Polish nation? Giertych's reply is ''no.'' According to him the revolution was prepared and the anarchy instigated by . . . the Jews:

''The creators and organizers of this group [KOR] were revolutionaries, atheists, and cosmopolitans, often Jews, or if they should have happened to be true Poles'' — i.e. ''Aryan'' — ''they were connected with Jewishness through marriages . . .'' (p. 6). ''The Mafia directed by the KOR cared nothing about the welfare of the Polish nation or the workers; they wanted an outbreak of a revolution. This is the foundation of Trotskyism: it is to continue with a permanent revolution'' (p. 12).

WE NOW KNOW that the military junta started a war against atheists, cosmopolitans, Trotskyites, and Jews in defense of the Polish nation! The same ideology was presented by Giertych's Nationalist Party before World War I and World War II; it was ''russophil'' and directed against the rotten West, against atheists, liberals, Masons, revolutionaries, and Jews.

These preposterous ideas might not warrant attention had it not been for the fact that Giertych was supported by two respectable Catholic professors.

In the April-May-June 1983 issue of *Duszpasterz Polski Zagranica* (''The Polish Pastor Abroad''), there is an essay marking ''The One Hundredth Anniversary of the Death of Karl Marx.'' It is written by Father Michal Poradowski, professor at the Catholic University in Santiago, Chile. Father Poradowski's article is an updated version of the traditional accusations made against the Jews: they are the cause of the evils of both capitalism and Communism, they try to rule the world clandestinely and to exploit it — as did the Biblical Joseph. According to Father Poradowski, Joseph acquired the wealth of Egypt for his family although Pharoah remained the nominal ruler. Poradowski maintains that Karl Marx and his Jewish friends are responsible for atheist and Communist ideology; that a Jew, Kerensky (his Russian Orthodox confessor still lives in New York), is responsible for the overthrow of the legitimate Czarist government; that the Jews Trotsky and Stalin (his Russian Orthodox seminary teachers might have been surprised) initiated the construction of the evil Soviet empire and that one should not be deceived by their historical feud. According to Father Poradowski theirs was a struggle between an Ashkenazic Jew, Trotsky, and a Sephardic Jew, Stalin, since these two kinds of Jews dislike each other.

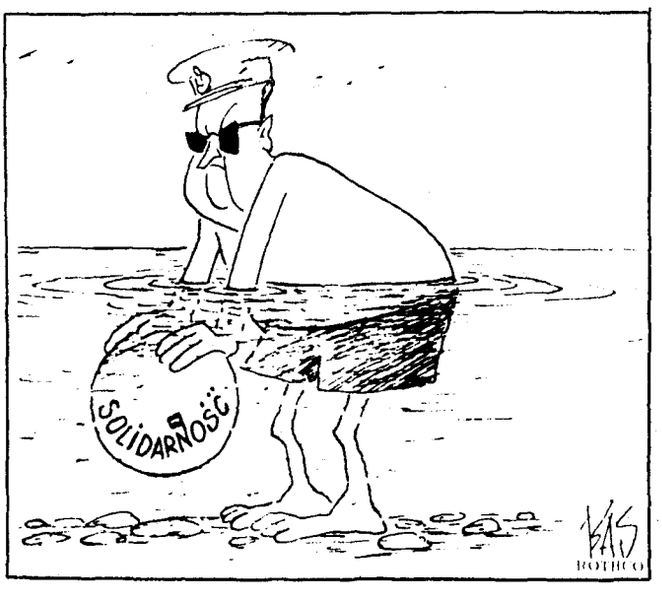
Trotsky, in exile, created a new organization, Father Poradowski continues, consisting exclusively of Jews (although, he adds, not all Jews are Trotskyites). The Trotskyite movement is kept alive thanks to the financial support of Jewish bankers on Wall Street. Thus, Father Poradowski has updated Hitler's explanation of the anti-Nazi wartime alliance between Moscow and Washington: simply stated, Jews rule in both capitals.

Actually, the charge that Trotskyites are financed by Jewish capitalists originated with Stalinists in the thirties and was extensively used during the Moscow show trials. Today this thesis is repeated in Warsaw and in Moscow in the campaign against KOR and, by extension, against Solidarity. Those organizations are accused of being influenced by Trotskyites, who in turn are the agents of Wall Street, and so it goes.

Father Poradowski's special discovery is that KOR is indeed a Jewish Trotskyite affair spearheaded by a Jewish family, the Michniks, who for conspiratorial reasons have assumed three different names. Needless to say, the secret police in Warsaw — who, as KOR leader Adam Michnik writes from his prison cell, have had so many difficulties in finding any proof against him and his colleagues in KOR — now rejoice over the appearance of such an unsuspected ally. They must be enthusiastic about Poradowski's allegations that Solidarity, a trade union consisting of good, simple, decent Catholics, has been manipulated by the Michniks and led astray by the Jews.

What is especially distressing about all these absurdities is that they were published by an organ connected with the Roman Curia and that the official purpose of this quarterly (whose editor-in-chief is a bishop) is to enlighten Polish clergymen abroad and to give them spiritual nourishment to be used in their daily pastoral duties.

COINCIDING WITH the publication of Father Poradowski's article was a lecture delivered by Professor Piotr Taras on April 15, 1983, at the Polish Institute of Arts and Science, New York City. During his lecture, entitled ''Church and Solidarity,'' Father Taras, professor at the Catholic University



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of Lublin, Poland, stated that the backbone of Solidarity is KOR, which consists of "Marxists, who are not Leninists, but Trotskyites." The Committee for the Defense of the Workers (KOR) endeavored, the lecturer said, *"to start an uprising in Poland . . .* KOR did not acknowledge this purpose openly, but this was their real desire."

KOR, according to Father Taras, received money and technical facilities (Telex, printing machines) from abroad to further their ends. Even money from Banco Ambrosiano was given to KOR and to Solidarity, according to Taras. In fact, his chain of intimations not only linked secret papal funding of Solidarity with the bankruptcy of the Banco Ambrosiano and the London hanging of its president, but left one with the distinct impression that John Paul II should be held responsible for preparing a bloody Polish uprising. Despite objections from the audience, Father Taras seemed determined to remain firm in his allegations.

It is obvious that the message of both of these priests directly contradicts the attitude of the pope. At the same time that Fathers Poradowski and Taras were unburdening themselves of anti-Semitic theories, John Paul II, in an April 13 general audience, was referring to the "martyrs" among the Jewish nation who "shared with us the terrible experience of the Hitlerite occupation." Later, during his Polish pilgrimage, the pope met with the lay Catholic editors of *Znak* ("Sign") and *Tygodnik Powszechny* ("Universal Weekly") in Krakow; in April *Tygodnik Powszechny*, long engaged in a campaign against all forms of anti-Semitism, had published an issue dedicated to the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising — one of the most memorable Catholic publications about the common heritage of Jews and Poles.

Yet the opposition between the pope and these two priests' behavior involves even more than anti-Semitism. Some analysts of Vatican affairs surmise that there are elements in the Curia who would be willing to see anti-Semitic utterances in the pope's native language undermine the authority and good reputation John Paul II enjoys, particularly within the important American Jewish community.

Be that as it may, it is certain that the theories of Fathers Poradowski and Taras coincide with the kind of Soviet anti-Semitism Moscow has regularly used to suppress liberal tendencies in Eastern-bloc nations. (This spring, a Soviet historian, Lev Kordeev, published a book in Moscow called *The Class Essence of Zionism*. In the spirit of Father Poradowski, Kordeev argues that the Jews have a special ability and inclination to exploit other nations; and that true revolutionaries should take cognizance of this fact. Jews, and especially Zionists, according to Kordeev, are the vanguard of counter-revolution. Especially dangerous are Jewish Trotskyites who are agents of American imperialism symbolized by the financiers of Wall Street.) With the approach of the trial of members of KOR and Solidarity, the endorsement of such a theory by Polish priest-professors points to a critical choice facing the Polish church. Although the release of the jailed activists was one of the preconditions of the pope's journey, the distinguished Polish journal published in Paris, *Kultura*, has noted (July-August 1983) that the demand for the release of these people has disappeared from recent statements made by the Primate, Cardinal Glemp. *Kultura* also noted: "There is no reaction on the part of the ecclesiastical superiors of the Reverends Taras and Poradowski. This fact creates well-founded suspicions that the arrested will be the scapegoats to be sacrificed on the altar of the attempts to normalize the relations between the church and General Jaruzelski."

Do we not observe here an unprecedented alliance: the Soviet Communist establishment with the radical right-wingers, and certain clerical elements? They are united, ostensibly, by anti-Semitism. Anti-Semitism, however, as usual, serves as the smokescreen behind which more important interests converge.

THE CORE of the problem is the attitude of the church and the Communist government towards Solidarity. The question facing the Polish Catholic hierarchy is old, yet completely new: what would serve the interests of the church better? One option is clear-cut polarization between the party-government, on the one hand, and the church, on the other. The alternative option is pluralism. The emergence of Solidarity and of the free trade unions filled the vacuum between two sides. The church lost the monopoly of the anti-Communist opposition, and there are certainly clergymen who regret that the church was "reduced" to one of the factors in the process of democratization and liberalization.

The well-known hesitation and reservations of Cardinal Wyszynski in August 1980 were never fully dispelled. The pope and the lower Polish clergymen, however, recognized that the greatest chance for the church exists in the tolerant, pluralistic society and not in a totalitarianism based on a bilateral pact between Caesar and the church.

On the other side of the coin is the Communist party, which is more afraid of pluralism than of polarization. The Communists long for dogmatic simplicity and clarity. They are mentally too weak to fight on many fronts, against many ideas and non-dogmatic approaches. The Communists are confident that in an eye-to-eye confrontation their ideas have a better chance than church dogmas. On the other hand, certain elements in the church hierarchy believe that in such a direct confrontation against the Communist "focus of evil" they will preserve their rule of souls. For them, too, the middlemen can only do harm.

Vatican II opted for freedom, tolerance, pluralism. The recent events once more show that there is a long distance between theoretical proclamations and a practical application of the new philosophy, and that Primate Glemp, supported by certain dignitaries in the Roman Curia, may be tempted to opt for polarization rather than a genuine pluralism of the Western type.

The struggle of the Polish people, supported by the free world, is for freedom and democracy, not for the simple delivery of Poland to theocracy. The church can continue to exist and fulfill her mission only in a free pluralistic society — such a society is the only viable alternative to Communism.

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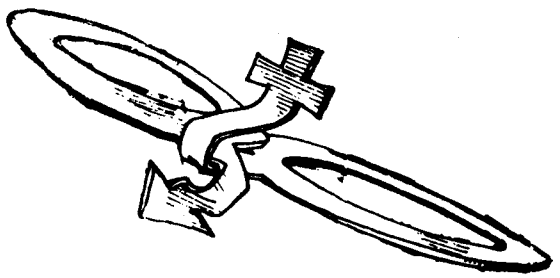

The 'squeal rule' & 'Lolita rights'

DAVID R. CARLIN, JR.

MY FRIEND HASTINGS, who is getting old enough now to qualify as a dirty old man whenever he has lascivious thoughts about a woman under thirty-five, was talking about the "squeal rule" the other day. This, you recall, is the proposed U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regulation which requires federally subsidized birth control clinics to notify the parents of girls seventeen and under who receive certain kinds of contraceptives—pill, IUD, or diaphragm. Opponents of the rule argue that it will lead to more contraception-less sex, hence more teen pregnancies, hence more abortions and out-of-wedlock births. Proponents contend the rule will promote parent-child communication about sexual matters. ("Ma, I'm makin' it with Johnny and I wanna go on the pill." "I'll break your arm, you little snit!")

Hastings, who has always had an uncanny knack for seeing some third issue that both parties to an argument had missed, says he doesn't give a damn whether parents are notified or not. What gets him is this. If his federal dollars are to be used to subsidize sex by teenage girls, he wants at least to get in on it. "Statutory rape laws," he points out with great justice, "discriminate against the very people who foot the bill. There's those luscious young chicks bestowing their favors on scrawny, pimply boys—boys who contribute hardly a dollar to the U.S. treasury—while mature men like me, who spend our lives in service to the Treasury, can only stand and wait for these young things to come of age. And by the time they come of age all the virginal starch will have been taken out of them. It's just not fair!"

Hastings says he may sue, citing the equal protection clause, for what he regards as his constitutional right to make an indecent proposition to the next precocious teeny-bopper he runs into. He calls this his "Lolita rights" and predicts it will eventually prove as great a boon to the class of dirty old men as Miranda rights have been to the criminal class.

When Hastings asked for my views on this burning controversy, I endeavored to explain.

In a period of economic disarray at home and rising Soviet-American tension abroad, it may seem a bit odd that a dispute about something as trivial as teen-age sex rules should be front-page news. But there's really nothing odd about it. Like almost all sexual controversies, this one reflects—or rather refracts, as through a prism—certain broader and more fundamental conflicts in American society and culture.

I don't refer simply to the issue of the appropriateness of adolescent sex, though that's part of it. For all the protestations on both sides that their big concern is with out-of-wedlock teen pregnancies and how best to prevent them, one suspects that the real division between the parties is based on a difference of attitude toward sexual activity by kids. One side (the parental notification side) tends to look with stern disapproval on adolescent sex, regardless of whether or not it results in pregnancy; the other (the confidentiality party), while not exactly jumping with joy at the spectacle of widespread and increasing sex among school-kids, regards it as a tolerable and fairly normal thing — at worst, a kind of venial sin.

But behind this deeper division there is a still deeper division. This concerns the question of whether sex is a strictly self-regarding activity or an activity in which society at large has a legitimate interest. Traditional sexual morality (in theory at least if not always in practice) was based on the latter assumption. Though sexual activity might be *performed* in private, it was not really a private act. Others—family, friends, neighbors, spouses, potential spouses, and society generally—felt they had interest which might be jeopardized by one's sexual activity; hence social regulation of that activity was warranted. The traditional rule that sex should be confined within marriage meant that one was not free to act sexually in one's capacity as a mere private or natural individual; instead one acted in virtue of a kind of public office—husband or wife— that society had artificially created and inducted one into. Sexual activity outside marriage was an act of private will, within marriage an act of social will. To borrow and alter some words of St. Paul, the married person could say: "No longer do I act, but society in me."

Contemporary sexual morality, by contrast, considers sex to be a strictly private concern. As for pre-marital sex, it regards as absurd the notion that one should be held answerable to others—even, or perhaps especially, to one's ultimate spouse, who, according to old-fashioned ideas, was thought to have the right to resent one's earlier sexual activities with other persons. As for extra-marital sex, contemporary morality (by a majority though far from unanimous opinion) still considers

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that to be improper. But the ground for this impropriety is different from that offered by traditional morality. It's not that adultery violates one's duty to society at large, as a kind of betrayal of the public trust contained in the office of husband or wife; it's not even that it violates one's *ex officio* duty to one's spouse. Nor is it that it violates the contract between husband and wife; for a contract, strictly speaking, is an agreement between parties that society has an interest in, and thus is willing to enforce; and although contemporary morality recognizes that marriage has certain contractual aspects (regarding property, for instance), sexual agreements are not among them. No, the reason adultery is still viewed as wrong is that it violates certain strictly private understandings or promises made between husband and wife; and if such promises are not given or if they are canceled by mutual consent at a later date, then of course it would not be considered wrong. Adultery is no longer an offense against the very nature of marriage, as traditional morality would have it; on those occasions when it is an offense, it is an offense against the duty to keep promises.

If sex is a strictly private affair, it follows, as most Americans have come to understand in the last decade or so, that homosexuality is perfectly unobjectionable. After all, what business of mine is it what you do in the strictly private portions of your life, no matter how little it may be to my taste? It follows too—to return to our starting point—that adolescent sex, at least when practiced with contraception and backstopped by abortion, is essentially unobjectionable. While parents of minor children may have a legitimate right to worry about the health and possible pregnancies of their sexually active kids, any interference beyond that point could be justified only on the traditional theory that sex is a matter of public interest. Other parental interference with the freedom of their children—with regard, e.g., to schoolwork, smoking, drinking, late hours—is justifiable because society considers these matters to fall within its sphere of legitimate interest and, so to speak, deputizes parents to protect its interests in the home. Where, as in the case of sex, society has renounced its supervisory claims, parents have no such claims either.

In retrospect it may seem odd that the traditional conception of sex should have held the field for as long as it did. After all, what has a better *prima facie* claim to be private than sex? Where is there a less plausible candidate for public inspection?

(c) Punch

"I suppose what I'm really looking for is some kind of meaningless relationship."

But that, I suggest, was just the point. Treating sex as a matter of public interest was so paradoxical, so great a *tour de force*, that it was an ideal way of teaching us that we are not simply individuals but part of a larger whole, the social whole. The lesson we learned, to borrow once again from St. Paul, was that we are members of one another. If something so private as sex fell into the public sphere, how much more so nearly everything else. Since even our genitalia were not available for free private use, society must have powerful claims indeed on the use to which we put our hands and brains. Though this lesson was aimed at everyone, its special target was adolescents; if they could be taught to regard so fascinating a business as sex as subject to societal discipline, there was hope they might appreciate the need for social control and social solidarity generally.

IF THE "SEXUAL revolution" of the last twenty years or so were no more than its name says it is, it would be no very big deal. A little sex more or less, no matter how great a thrill it may happen to be for certain individuals involved, hardly shakes the foundations of the republic. But I think there is more to it than the name suggests; and the fact that we've tracked its course with so much solemnity indicates that we're at least dimly aware of these implications. Sex is only the opening wedge, the tip of the iceberg, the nose of the camel under the tent. The big issue is not sex versus chastity, but individualism versus social control. The privatization of sex has been a sensational victory for individualism, opening the way to further triumphs. If the traditional socialization of sex was a way of driving home the point that we are essentially social, not individual, beings, the reverse process—the privatization of sex—has been an effective way of driving home the opposite lesson: that we are essentially individual beings, not answerable to others for actions that don't tangibly and rather directly affect them. In and of itself the sexual passion is (a great deal of romantic propaganda to the contrary notwithstanding) a profoundly egoistic phenomenon; but the alchemy of socialization (which includes romantic propaganda as one of its instruments) has traditionally transmuted it into a social thing. By giving sex license now to lapse into its original egoistic state, the sexual revolution has given the signal to a multitude of other activities, largely self-centered though often less strikingly so than sex—money-making, money-spending, recreation, self-development, falling in love, preparing one's children to get ahead of the other fellow's children, etc.—that they also needn't take pains to try to become something more altruistic than their natures dictate. If I can have an easy conscience about privatized sex, then surely I can have an easy conscience about privatizing these other things as well.

Some place Luigi Barzini complains that all Italy is divided between the Catholics and the Communists, leaving hardly any breathing space for a reasonable man. I don't know about Italy, but in America, where the Communists are virtually non-existent and the Catholics relatively sane, the division that causes reasonable men to feel short of breath is that between

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"conservatives" who hold the impossible (and not very lovely) dream of creating social solidarity on the basis of old-fashioned petty bourgeois respectability, trimmed with a gingerbread of born-again Christianity, and "liberals" (usually themselves petty bourgeois, but of the new-fangled variety, hence with very different standards of respectability) who, like so many blithe spirits, cheerfully encourage the maximization of privacy and individualism, never pausing to notice that their program promotes psychic and societal disorder, along with the disintegration of both personal and social conscience.

WHEN I FINISHED, Hastings, who had been nodding somewhat during the latter stages of my exposition, roused himself and said he was sure everything I had said was correct.

"But what really concerns me," he added, "is this. Once I win my Lolita rights, do you think we can get the court to order the government to set up a computer dating service to put dirty old men in touch with willing nymphets?"

Recordings

MOON & GLOOM

DAVID BOWIE'S FRUSTRATED MESSIANISM

ALMOST FIFTEEN years after his first hit single, David Bowie can still market best-selling records and fill Madison Square Garden at will. Perhaps it is time to think very seriously about his rhetoric.

Mr. Bowie is an important indicator of trends of thought and musical genre in popular culture. Although he has often made disclaimers of any didactic intentions whatsoever (while pausing for breath between bombastic philosophical pronouncements), he had led the way in popular music to the exploration of the themes of alienation and technology through folk music (*Space Oddity*, 1969), sexualized mysticism through heavy metal (*The Man Who Sold the World*, 1971), messianism and apocalypticism through blues-based rock & roll (*Ziggy Stardust*, 1972; *Diamond Dogs*, 1974), the American Dream and totalitarianism through soul and disco (*Young Americans*, 1975; *Station to Station*, 1976), solipsism in tension with global consciousness through avant-garde expressionism (*Low*, 1977; *Heroes*, 1977; *Lodger*, 1979) — and of late has signaled a return to rock & roll and rhythm & blues in order to confront modernity (*Scary Monsters*, 1980; *Let's Dance*, EMI America, 1983).

Let's Dance is a strange and difficult album; the music consists of breathtaking and very nearly seamless exercises in several popular music sub-genres, with lyrics that are disturbing in their expression of an ambivalent religiosity. In the keynote song, "Modern Love," we are told that *there's no sign of life/ it's just the power to charm*; evidently life has been supplanted by something known as modern love. The narrator tells us that he will never fall for modern love, but that it *gets me to the church on time*, which *terrifies me . . . makes me party . . . puts my trust in God and Man*, which in turn means *no confession . . . . no religion*.

No religion seems to be a cry of denial that echoes throughout the album; Mr. Bowie, who in fifteen years of songwriting has seldom missed an opportunity to articulate the theme of naive but grandiose messianic aspirations, is not entirely successful in abandoning his preoccupation. In his latest work, the *sound of the devil breaking parole* ("Ricochet") is very much in evidence.

Although "Modern Love" establishes the album's evasiveness on the subject of religion, it also represents an explicit attempt to come to grips with the problem of love, which, in Mr. Bowie's world of modernity, is a disease of addiction. This theme persists throughout the album: *I'm a mess without my China Girl* ("China Girl") . . . *I love you/ what would I do* ("Without You") . . . *my love for you would break my heart in two* ("Let's Dance") . . . *you wouldn't believe what I've been through/ it's been so long* ("Cat People"). It is a theme closely associated with a sense of anomie and despair; Mr. Bowie tells us: *I feel like a sailboat adrift on the sea* ("Shake it") . . . *I'm feeling disconnected* ("Shake It") . . . *I feel a wreck . . . I feel tragic . . . I'm a mess* ("China Girl") . . . *I'm ready to throw in my hand . . . I'm willing to call it a day . . . I won't take another chance* ("Without You"). Love is a drug that sometimes brings relief, but often the side effects are quite as severe as the initial pain. "Cat People," a new arrangement of the 1982 movie theme song with lyrics by Mr. Bowie, is a track that conveys the rawness of emotion associated with addictive love. He has never been more apt in his description of the self-sustaining nature of obsession: *I've been putting out fire with gasoline*.

Mr. Bowie's songwriting has often suggested that the potential for intimacy and connectedness is pitted against a desire for supremacy. In "Chorus Girl," the narrator has *visions of swastikas in my head/ plans for everyone*. He warns the China Girl that he is *a man who wants to rule the world*. But when he gets excited by the grandiosity of his vision, it is the China Girl who soothes away the tension, substituting sexual release for the fulfillment of his global plans. It is love as methadone.

The album's title song is in many ways an extended meditation on the transience of this kind of love: *let's dance for fear your grace should fall/ let's dance for fear tonight is all*. It is not grace at all, but temporary relief that the narrator finds *under the moonlight/ this serious moonlight* ("Let's Dance").

By the end of the album, love has been de-natured and re-created as a transient dancefloor phenomenon; any other manifestation would constitute too serious a spiritual threat. In the final song, "Shake It," the narrator recognizes the potential for seeking heaven or hell, but opts instead for a more familiar destination: the discotheques of New York City. This reflects a pattern that is repeated throughout the album: crucial moral issues pertaining to religion and love are confronted; each time they prove to be too shattering to resolve, and solace is sought in whatever gratifications are available.

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Let's Dance is a disturbing failure — if it is an attempt to trivialize what Mr. Bowie has called (in the 1982 single, "Under Pressure") *the terror of knowing what this world is about*. A song from the *Scary Monsters* album ("Because You're Young," 1980) may offer us a clue as to Mr. Bowie's artistic intentions: *these pieces are broken/ hope I'm wrong/ but I know . . . and it makes me sad/ so I'll dance my life away*. He offers what is ultimately an unsatisfactory antidote to the tensions of secularized modernity: *turn the holy pictures so they face the wall* ("Ricochet") and *let's dance to the song we're playing on the radio* ("Let's Dance"). And in fact, the music has an exuberance that contrasts sharply with the anomie and fragmentation expressed by the lyrics. David Bowie has not merely enjoined us to dance; he has also provided some of the most exciting rhythm & blues-based dance music in years. DEBORAH ELIZABETH FINN

(Deborah Elizabeth Finn is a Master of Theological Studies candidate at Harvard Divinity School. This fall she is teaching a course on religion and rock music.)

Screen

THE INVISIBLE MAN

YOU ARE WHAT YOU MEET

A DIFFERENCE between Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton is that only the latter makes you burst out laughing. Dwight MacDonald pointed this out years ago. There are little moments in a Keaton film, surprising and fleeting gestures of accommodation, that make us laugh at the sheer humanity of the character he portrays. My favorite is when he boards an antiquated train in *Our Hospitality* wearing a stovepipe hat that won't fit under the coach's low ceiling. Decorously, and with glances of apology both to other passengers and to history for his tonsorial anachronism, he replaces the stovepipe with his familiar porkpie. I just can't help guffawing. The finest moments in Chaplin's films — Adenoid Hinckle's ballet with the globe of the world in *The Great Dictator*, or Little Fellow being fed through the glass of a monstrous machine in *Modern Times* — don't strike me with the same immediacy.

The truth is that Chaplin is the greater genius. His idea of comedy is larger than Keaton's, his insight into humanity more piercing. But the points in his movies where you recognize this are not ones that bring tears of laughter to your eyes. Instead, you sigh with satisfaction at the rightness of the image before you. That's brilliant, you murmur to yourself.

Zelig is brilliant, too. The film is a meditation on fame, on the emptiness of it. The title character, Leonard Zelig, is a man famous for being famous. Wherever the rich, the noted, the newsworthy gather, Zelig is there. He is the grandest impostor of all time. At a party in a Chicago speakeasy, he hobnobs with reputed gangsters, then sits in on clarinet with the Negro jazz band. Woody Allen's movie is a documentary about a fictitious character who was a phenomenon in the 1920s, but is now forgotten. The film's first master stroke is to be set in the twenties, which was the age that invented modern phenomena of this sort. In an era of flag-pole sitters, a man celebrated for being a gate-crasher is completely credible. In the first glimpse we get of him, Zelig is being awarded the brightest honor that period could bestow; a tickertape parade. He's Charles Lindbergh, the quintessential twenties figure, someone who becomes the most famous of them all simply by being such a modest, unassuming likable guy.

Zelig is Woody Allen's most personal film since *Annie Hall*. It is, for one thing, an in-joke that Allen and his current girlfriend, Mia Farrow, are playing on his co-star in *Annie*, Diane Keaton, who was his girl then. *Zelig* is a parody of *Reds*, Keaton's big hit with her new boyfriend, Warren Beatty. But *Zelig* is not just whimsy. While lovers come and go, the abiding problem in Allen's life, the one that won't go away, is his own celebrity.

Zelig is the meditation on fame that Allen attempted, but botched, in *Stardust Memories*. The new film gets to the heart of the paradox that celebrity contains for Allen. The movie sees the modern celebrity as a kind of Everyman figure — someone who is all things to all people, and a nobody to himself. Leonard Zelig is a zero, a cipher. Left alone in a room, he would have an identity crisis. To be a Zelig you'd have to be incredibly famous, instantly recognizable the whole world over, and at the same time painfully shy, nervous, insecure — as Woody Allen is. *Stardust Memories* was a resentful film. It was angry and confused. In *Zelig* Allen achieves an insight into his predicament that eluded him in the earlier movie. He becomes more objective about himself. He is dispassionate.

Just as a technical feat, *Zelig* is stunning. Matte shots, where one image is overlaid on another, have become extremely sophisticated in recent years because of space epics like *Star Wars*. Allen makes ingenious new use of this technique by inserting Zelig not only in still photographs, but in motion sequences. Much credit has to go to director of photography, Gordon Willis, for the trick here was to balance the light between the new footage and the wavering, scratchy look of old newsreels. Willis has literally made Zelig into the face in the crowd Allen wants him to be. He's the batter on deck while Ruth is at the plate, the storm trooper milling with other Brown Shirts in the street behind Hitler. Willis makes all the footage of Allen and Farrow alone compatible with the old black-and-white stock. They move with the same brittle jerkiness as everyone else. And Allen adds the finishing touch to the film's bogus authenticity in the form of interviews with contemporary intellectuals — Susan Sontag, Irving Howe, Saul Bellow — who comment ponderously on Zelig's place in history.

Zelig's is a personality that can split itself into a hundred different people. He is, as they used to say, a suitable case for treatment. The documentary focuses on the attempts made by his psychiatrist, Dr. Eudora Fletcher (Farrow), to cure him of

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his compulsive adaptability. The psychiatric interviews between doctor and patient are the funniest routine in the film. The first thing Dr. Fletcher has to do is disabuse Zelig of his delusion, whenever he's with her, that he's also a psychiatrist. What makes these scenes funny is that the loquacious, neurotic Woody we all know and love momentarily appears. He emerges from the somewhat black humor of his Zelig character like the sun from an overcast sky. Aside from these few minutes, however, Allen doesn't allow himself to do his familiar *schtick*. Laughter of the sort that provokes is not what he's after here. A higher amusement is. He keeps himself, as a comedian, out of it. He remains true to Zelig's character, which is to have no character, to be a chameleon.

The result of all this, as I said before, is brilliant. If I find the movie disconcerting, that is only because brilliance sheds an eerie kind of light — a cool blue light that ultimately leaves us more *be*mused than *a*mused. *Zelig* is a cerebral comedy. The pure originality of Allen's idea, the clarity of his conception, is what succeeds here. Through all the years of Allen's straight comedies, from *Take the Money and Run* to *Sleeper*, I criticized him for not being Keatonesque enough. I always wanted him to be better at providing those spontaneous touches, the little grace notes of comedy, that make me crack up at a Keaton movie. But with *Annie Hall*, his work turned in a different direction altogether. It was never Keaton he was on his way to becoming, but Chaplin. Allen's occasional cynicism is just another form of Chaplin's sentimentality. Allen's Zelig is a reincarnation of Chaplin's Tramp. *Zelig* is Allen's *Modern Times*.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

'WAR GAMES' & OUR COMPUTER CULTURE

From HAL to WOPR

TOM O'BRIEN

LIKE THE STOCK MARKET, the media has reached a stage of computer saturation. Last year a film called *TRON* took place inside a computer; this year even James Bond's Miss Moneypenny has adopted one for office use in *Octopussy*. Hardly a night can go by, even with minimal TV viewing, without seeing Charlie Chaplin's "little tramp" making peace with modern times over his IBM personal computer (and image-wise IBM thus softening its "impersonal" reputation). Besides merit pay, demands for computer literacy dominate academic news — assuming, of course, that a more basic literacy can be taken for granted. Despite the tiring of Atari, in short, artificial intelligence still sustains the image of a brave new world.

There is a competing image of computers, however, a heritage of the movies made under the sign of Aquarius in the late sixties and early seventies. Consider HAL, the super metal mind of *2001, A Space Odyssey*, who took over a Jupiter-bound spacecraft and terminated its onboard astronauts before they could terminate him. Consider *Demon Seed*, where a satanic computer impregnates Julie Christie, one of Hollywood's more subtle experiments in blending diverse genres. Consider *Alien* and its omniscient machine "Mother," who goes on a Medea-like rampage against its operators. Or consider *Simon*, whose zany but harmless computer was played by the voice of Louise Lasser.

These movies, however, have less to do with Mary Hartman than Mary Shelley. Long ago, her *Frankenstein* provided the prototype of the machine mind run afoul, either because demonically possessed or contaminated by the secret vices of humanity. The tradition she mothered rests on one simple assertion: artificial intelligence means catastrophe.

In this context, *War Games* says something different, marking, perhaps, a new maturity in our attitude to machines. Most other media visions of computers have tended to simplistic images of good and evil. But *War Games* evades both computer chic and computer gothic, snappy-Apple-happy enthusiasm for artificial intelligence and counter-culture hostility. *War Games* warns us, as Emerson did at the beginning of the industrial revolution, "things are in the saddle and ride mankind." But *War Games* also delights in things, and refuses to blame hi-tech for our own malfunctions.

Consider WOPR, the *War Games* computer, the latest in the line of movie machines with a mind of its own. Its name is sardonically pronounced "Whopper," and it nearly accidentally whops mankind into nuclear war.

But WOPR itself is no monster. It's innocent, its voice haunting and childlike, its main ambition "to play."

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Its defects lie not in a poisoned will or perverse heart, but in the programming assumption that it could never be misled by accident. Once provoked, WOPR cannot be deterred from playing a game of nuclear combat, but not because it knows what it is doing is evil. Rather, WOPR cannot acknowledge a distinction between games and other illusions and reality. "What's the difference?" it asks, the most terrifying line in the film.

WOPR does not reflect our sins, in short, but our complacency. There are no real villains in the film: the machine is not out to get man, nor are men (both Americans and Russians) out to get each other. Instead, men victimize themselves by their surrender of will to machines, by their refusal to accept human fallibility as a necessary part of decision making.

Nevertheless, *War Games* celebrates computer culture in small ways. In its early sequences, we are saturated with scenes of video arcades and computerized library searches, of the hero's hijinks with his home computer and his brief encounter with some programming friends, satirical types already known in computer folklore as "nerds." *War Games* thus expresses the delight in the computer as toy that colors so much of its advertising for home use and that dominates such movies as the recent *Rollover*, early parts of the current *Superman III*, and upcoming fall TV series such as ABC's *Whiz Kids* and a new version of NBC's *Knight Rider*.

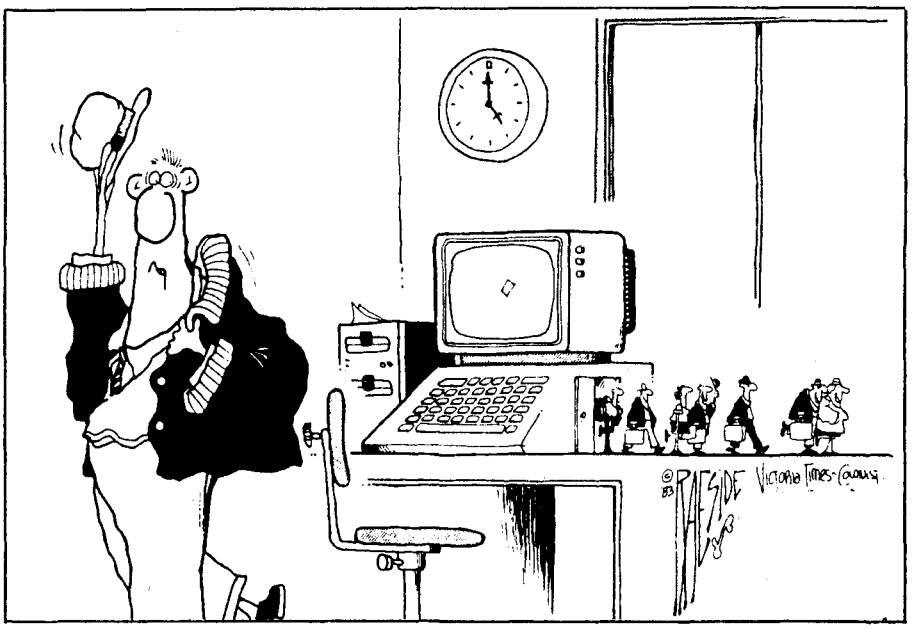
Still, *War Games* also criticizes the notion that computers will always function more efficiently than men, and isolates their exact point of weakness, or "vulnerability," to use the term of the computer trade. The issue is not human misuse of computers — though the hero's mischief with school grades reflects an increasing number of real life stories — but human inability to correct a mistake that a computer has been programmed or been induced to make. Computers rarely make mistakes, but when they do, *War Games* claims, watch out. It thus reflects some contemporary black comedies: stories of people notified that they are dead by Social Security offices; stories of payroll checks mislaid or miscalculated; stories of airline tickets assigned to the wrong person or seats assigned in the wrong plane, etc. The difficulty that the film underlines is that humans can correct their errors; computers can't, and operators have to go to extraordinary lengths to trace and then erase the consequences of their foul-ups.

The foul-ups so far include only one disaster. An Air New Zealand DC-10 crashed in the Antarctic in 1979 because the pilots relied entirely on an inaccurate computer program during a snow storm; when they were supposed to be over water they hit a mountain, killing all 257 aboard. Fortunately, personnel at North American Air Defense have caught supposedly fail-safe computers when they signaled false nuclear alerts twice in the last several years. But pity the poor sinner at Heaven's gate if St. Peter goes hi-tech: if a record is lost or mislabeled, it may take two eternities to correct his fate.

The most fantastic thing about the *War Games* WOPR is that it can *learn* and correct its programming error: it realizes that there is no point in a "game" of thermonuclear war that no one can win and that must always end in stalemate. The film closes with a stunning sequence in which WOPR goes through all the strategic geopolitical variables and makes its discovery, pleading in its final fatigue for a "nice game of chess." The suggestion is clear: will humanity learn in time? Will it give up playing with no-win variables — MX and Cruise Missiles and Backfire Bombers (the Russian answer to one of our answers to one of their . . .)? Will humanity renounce war as a game?

This provides a useful allegory on military affairs, but an utter fantasy on computers. They don't learn; they store, retrieve, and apply. WOPR gets bored with a meaningless game, but he doesn't grow to see the difference between game and reality. Computers, perhaps, can be programmed to learn to distinguish better among sets of facts. But could any ever be programmed to distinguish fact from value, to correct a bureaucratic mistake by distinguishing between a dead person and a live one or by understanding the injustice of a payroll error?

Advertising — and now educational oversell — make computers sound like saviors, as if their end product can really transfigure the good or bad quality of initial human input and ongoing human monitoring. *War Games*, for the most part, is worthwhile because it protests that delusion. Fortunately, it also avoids an opposite error. Its distinction in the film tradition is that it treats the computer neither as savior nor devil, just false god. As Norbert Weiner, a computer expert at MIT, has said, "render to computers the things that are computers' and to man the things that are man's."



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Books: FOCUSING ON THE 'FOCUS OF EVIL'

AT A TIME of Soviet-American confrontation in which the two nuclear superpowers are squaring off like deadly scorpions, five experts add some depth to our increasingly stereotyped view of the Kremlin as, in President Reagan's metaphor, the "focus of evil" in the world. The authors include Georgi Arbatov, a leading Soviet specialist on the U.S., Viktor Suvorov, a Red Army officer who defected to the West. Hélène Carrère d'Encausse, a political scientist at the Sorbonne, Marshall Goldman, a economist at Wellesley and the Harvard Russian Research Center, and Dina Kaminskaya, an émigré Moscow attorney. They all contribute novel, if sometimes contradictory, insights into the nature of the rivalry.

If U.S.-Soviet relations are "now at the lowest point in perhaps a decade," in Mr. Arbatov's *The Soviet Viewpoint*, the fault is primarily that of an "American power elite" pursuing its nostalgic quest for global hegemony. Arbatov can speak authoritatively, as an adviser to Yuri Andropov, a member of the Central Committee and director of the Institute on U.S. and Canadian Studies. Although he manipulates his facts to cast the Soviet regime in a totally blameless role for the renewed Cold War, he scores telling points off his interlocutor, Dutch journalist Willem Oltmans. One of the most striking is that Washington's approach is based on a conception of the Soviet system as "something illegitimate, created not by God but by the Devil, and that our existence in its present form should be ended somehow."

Arbatov cites published studies going back to a National Security Council memo of 1950, to show that subversion of the Soviet regime has been a recurrent U.S. goal. He can point to generations of new weapons added to the American arsenal since the 1960s, which the Soviets have had to catch up with, until they are now at a level of "rough parity," as even the Pentagon concedes. After U.S. military superiority faded in the post-Vietnam era, a virtual conspiracy of political "ideologues," captains of a $200 billion arms industry, and "extremist" political leaders created a "cheap Western scenario" of an enemy who had to be beaten to the draw. For the relatively tolerable policy of deterrence, says Arbatov, they substituted the "hoax of a Soviet threat" and a chilling doctrine of "thinkable" nuclear war.

Readers may bridle at Arbatov's claims that Soviet dissidents are merely criminals whose fate should be of no concern to the West, that the invasion of Afghanistan was a "purely internal" matter of averting a "right-wing coup," or that the ferment in Poland can simply be blamed on the "misdeeds of certain officials." Yet there is cogency in his assertions that these issues are peripheral to a basic "right to survive" on both sides. Arbatov seems to reflect a genuine concern of the Soviet leadership at new U.S. weapons being emplaced in Western Europe, setting up a nuclear tripwire. One does not need a Marxist outlook to see United States disarmament efforts as a desultory exercise by negotiators known more for their brinkmanship than their experience or commitment.

The peace-loving, defensive image of the USSR in Arbatov's book is undercut by Viktor Suvorov's *Inside the Soviet Army*. That pseudonymous author, who served fifteen years in command and staff positions before defecting to Britain, pictures the Red Army as the "Striking force of world revolution," whose strategic doctrines are based on attack at all costs. The officers, chosen for their bravado and brutality, are attracted to careers as the wardens of a prison-camp society by the lure of a "pleasanter and more varied life" than the diet of "bread or potatoes" offered to workers.

Suvorov's account suffers from the evident bias of an apostate and a lack of documentation. Its tales of sadistic sergeants making recruits clean latrines with toothbrushes could be matched by any American GI. Nor is his contention that Soviet missile forces are geared for "a massive preemptive attack" without its Western counterparts. Suvorov's picture of an army riddled by intrigue and deception, while its members juggle conflicting obligations to military, party, and KGB authorities, adds up to a much less potent adversary than the one the U.S. has been advertising to its NATO allies.

Hélène Carrère d'Encausse's *Confiscated Power* makes a companion piece to Marshall Goldman's *USSR in Crisis*. The former finds the Kremlin staffed by an elite of septuagenerians whose bureaucratic caution leads to "immobilism" at home, while an innovative foreign policy scores victories abroad due to "the impotence of the capitalist world." The latter sees the Soviet economy at "a critical turning point," shackled to the Stalinist legacy of promoting heavy industry at the expense of agriculture and consumer goods.

In d'Encausse's opinion, the system has abandoned personalized for institutionalized power, maintaining a "dictatorship" without "widespread terror," through the party's control of key appointments. The old men at the top

THE SOVIET VIEWPOINT
Georgi Arbatov
Dodd, Mead, $13.95, 219 pp.

INSIDE THE SOVIET ARMY
Viktor Suvorov
Macmillan, $15.95, 269 pp.

CONFISCATED POWER
Hélène Carrère d'Encausse
Harper & Row, $19.95, 401 pp.

USSR IN CRISIS
Marshall Goldman
Norton, $15, 210 pp.

FINAL JUDGMENT
Dina Kaminskaya
Simon & Schuster, $18.95, 348 pp.

Harvey Fireside

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preside over a golden ghetto — a "countersociety" — that walls out the youth who prefer romance magazines to political tracts and that oppresses demoralized workers, religious sectarians, and minority nationalities. The resulting "society of false citizens" marches in obligatory circles, but has no real choices in life.

For Goldman, the Soviet industrial colossus rests on clay feet. He supplies mordant details about corrupt officials executed for smuggling caviar, managers who thrive on illegally obtained "favors," and students who doubt that there are any Communists left except "in some remote corner of Siberia." A materialistic society that can't manage to satisfy either the dreams or the stomachs of its people, the USSR can limp along at best or, more likely, undertake reforms that may unloose an avalanche of open protest and violence.

Although Dina Kaminskaya was eventually hounded out of her country, *Final Judgment* betrays no bitterness as it recounts how a courageous attorney could prevail even against cynical judges who mete out predetermined sentences. Her major success was to win a reversal of a conviction in the case of a lad framed for the rape and murder of a young girl. She went on to expose "the illegality of the dissident trials" of Vladimir Bukovsky, Yulii Daniel, Pavel Litvinov, and Yurri Galanskov, until her defense of Tatar activist Ilya Gabai cost her the "access" required for political cases.

In Kaminskaya's judgment, the judicial system "does work," with acquittals in nonpolitical cases "by no means infrequent." Indeed, free spirits like Kaminskaya and her clients may someday save the system in spite of itself. With all its strengths and failures, the USSR represents a much more complex reality than the diabolical model of the new Cold Warriors — a reality that Washington will have to engage politically, not militarily, in a common pursuit of survival.

Triumph of the dimestore novel

IRONWEED
William Kennedy
Viking, $14.75, 227 pp.

Seán de Hóra

IRONWEED is the third of the "Albany Novels," in which William Kennedy tries to do with Depression-era Albany what Faulkner did with the rural South. Although his efforts have met with general critical acclaim, one might question the validity of his ethnic microcosm and wonder if Kennedy has not merely served up a chic smorgasbord of shallow, perverse, and degenerate Irish characters, who justify all the excuses that know-nothings, nativists and Ku-Kluxers once used to keep these people on their own side of the tracks.

Kennedy's first novel, *Legs*, a fictionalized account of the career of the gangster Jack "Legs" Diamond, is little more than a collage of violent imagery. In the end mechanical violence robs Diamond of any compassion, sympathy, or understanding which the reader might otherwise feel for him. Diamond is a shallow character with little to distinguish him from the Legs Diamonds, Al Capones, and John Dillingers whose lives filled the paperback book racks in five- and ten-cent stores a generation ago. Kennedy's graphic, violent, and imaginative imagery has not raised the gangster novel to the level of serious fiction but merely brought talent to a drugstore genre.

The hero of Kennedy's second novel, *Billy Phelan's Greatest Game*, is a two-bit gambler and pool hustler. When the son of an Albany political czar is kidnapped, the family asks Billy to check out a suspect. In spite of the fact that the kidnappers are threatening to kill an aquaintance of his, Billy doesn't want to be a fink. So he tells the family where to go, and when the kidnappers are caught, the family rewards Billy by having him blackballed from Albany's hot spots. A newspaper friend writes a column which melts the hearts of the bosses, and Billy is back in his old haunts. Hardly tragic, hardly the stuff of great novels, and hardly any sympathy for Billy. However, there is one minor character who whets the reader's appetite. This is Billy's father, Francis Phelan, murderer, major league third baseman, and derelict, an Irish version of the Wandering Jew, who rides the box cars and sleeps in the hobo jungles of America with his companion, Helen Archer.

Kennedy's third novel, *Ironweed,* is Francis Phelan's saga. We follow Francis's odyssey through the soup kitchens, honky tonks, and flophouses of Albany on the last weekend of October 1938 — the weekend of Halloween, All Saints Day, and Orson Welles's famous War of the Worlds broadcast.

Francis's troubles began during a trolley strike in 1901, when he picked up a baseball-size rock and busted a scab's head. He got away and spent that summer and every summer for the next two decades playing baseball. Although he returned to his family every winter, Francis was destined to be a homeless murderer. One day in 1916 he picked up his thirteen-day-old son, Gerald. The baby slipped out of his diaper, fell to the floor and broke his neck. Francis Phelan again left home, and this time he did not return for twenty-two years.

Invited home by his son Billy, Francis shows up one evening with a turkey. The family receives him warmly — a bit too warmly perhaps, particularly his wife Annie. During the course of the evening Francis is invited to stay, and the question now arises as to whether Francis Phelan can come home or if he is doomed to return to the lonely wet mattresses, cheap gin mills, and empty highways.

In spite of the fact that the imagery is again overdone and sensational, and the fact that dialogue does not always measure up to the description, Francis Phelan is Kennedy's best character study yet, and the story is quite moving at times.

But in the end Kennedy's triumph is more rhetorical than literary. Publishers demand sex and violence for their clientele, and Kennedy caters to these demands admirably. Also, I for one am a little tired of a seemingly endless parade of writers who by virtue of a Celtic surname and a Roman Catholic baptismal certificate are accorded the status of

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Catholic writers but yet dismiss the faith which inspired Dante and Newman, Hopkins and Auden, as a mere social phenomenon at best, and at worst, superstitious hocus pocus fit only for naive kids, senile hags, and tyrannical old priests.

If Kennedy felt that it was necessary to pander his talents in order to break into print, that is behind him now. Having established himself as an important contemporary author, it remains to be seen if he will juxtapose his decadent images with more sensitive and sublime counterparts in an attempt to create a representative Catholic-American literature or if he will continue to pimp himself off to a jaded public which demands ever greater doses of violence, scatology, and sex.

Straighten our crooked paths

THE SUPREME KOAN
CONFESSIONS ON A JOURNEY INWARD WITH TWO BUDDHIST-CHRISTIAN MIRACLE PLAYS
Frederick Franck
Crossroad, $12.95, 183 pp.

James Finn Cotter

THE SUPREME koan, according to Frederick Franck, is the riddle of being human, the question confronting each person who looks inward: Who am I? What is it to be human? Franck answers with another question: Who is Christ? What is his humanity to me? This Christ is not a historical figure but the Risen One, or rather the Rising One who enlightens everyone in the world willing to see him face to face. *The Supreme Koan* is about this metanoia, a change of heart and discovery of the unseen in the ordinary events and encounters of life. It is about falling in love with Someone we meet nowhere and everywhere, who is and is not ourselves, who is what we want to be. In the Passion Play included here, the Wandering Jew exclaims: "Wherever my eye goes,/I see him rising from a million graves./I am not he,/ yet he and I,/we are not-two." What is the sound of one hand clapping?

How Franck came to this profound and simple seeing of Christ is told in the three sections of this book. Part One, "The Image Reaffirmed," is an autobiographical sketch of growing up in Holland, the only son of agnostic parents in a Catholic area, a loner secretly visiting a Romanesque church with its life-size crucifix and plaster Sacred Heart and watching the plays of *Everyman* and the Passion pageant at Eastertide. Part Two presents the author's own modern versions of these plays, *The Death and Life of Every One* and *Inquest on a Crucifixion*. Part Three is an epilogue, "Reflections on Faith, Belief, and Nihilism."

In this final section, Franck distinguishes between faith as an act of trustful self-giving and belief as adherence to an established creed, and he challenges believers and non-believers alike to become truly faithful followers of a living Way that shines through the disasters and pretenses that obscure his presence today. The world has embraced Nihilism wholeheartedly, in images of greed and sex that float up from our television screens on a "tidal wave of triviality," in our politics, business practices, and electronic evangelism, in the absurd worship of the past (as in the Oberammergau travesty that offers the Christian tourist an escape from the Crucified One in his own heart). In fact, the easy appropriation of the title "Christian" is risky, anonymous or not, just as the facile donning of the name "Buddhist" is dangerous. The reality is there in Christ and Buddha, but we had better beware of flaunting our faith — it may merely be belief.

Franck wants us to begin humbly all over again, with human beings sensing the mystery of inner evil and transcendent longing for goodness. Zen is the undoing of preconceived ideas of righteous power over others, of elitist, male-dominated, legalistic thought-control in the name of Christ, Buddha, Allah, or Yahweh. We have only our humanity in common, and that we share in the perfected Image of the Human, the revela-

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Edward Schillebeeckx
IN CONVERSATION WITH HUUB OOSTERHUIS & PIET HOOGEVEEN

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tion of the True Man, the Original Face, the Self, Christ Consciousness. The Sleeping Child is waiting to be wakened, the nameless one waiting to be called, the Suffering one waiting to rejoice.

Of all Franck's books — this is his sixteenth — I consider this to be his most important. Like *Pilgrimage to Now/Here* and *Art as a Way* it is personal, but also like *The Zen of Seeing* and *The Awakened Eye* it is instructive. More, it is a prophetic work, a call to straighten our crooked paths and turn inward. Imagination, emotion, and reason all come to play (literally) in this moving appeal to the heart.

A primitive argument

THE HUMAN CYCLE

Colin M. Turnbull

Simon & Schuster, $14.95, 283 pp.

Eugene C. Bianchi

THOSE who have written books know the queasy feeling of being suspended over the literary abyss by well-intentioned promoters who speak in full-throated superlatives all over the book jacket and publicity flyers. This is unfair to authors who try to write a decent book, even to a famous anthropologist like Colin Turnbull. *Publishers Weekly* says this volume will likely become an anthropological classic; Ashley Montagu raises decibels to the sounds of heavenly predestination: "If there ever was a book that was destined to become a classic, this is it." When publishers say these things, mortal authors, who may have read one or two true classics, toss uneasily at night fearing Olympian retribution for such unsolicited *hubris*.

Now, this is a good book, one well worth reading. In many ways it is a very good essay, stimulating comparative thinking on the life cycle. Turnbull reflects on five stages of the human life span in "small-scale societies" (for him a less pejorative term than "tribal" or "primitive") in India, Tibet, and Africa. He compares positive qualities in these cultures to their counterparts or lack thereof in modern western nations. In general, Turnbull finds greater social responsibility and role integration in less technologically developed cultures. In contrast, individual fragmentation, competition rather than cooperation, and neglect of spiritual or transcendent experience characterize the modernized world. An added benefit is the author's readable style and his engaging use of events drawn from his own life.

Yet there is a central flaw in Turnbull's procedure. This weakness might be described as claiming too much by way of juxtapositions. He finds, for example, that among the Mbuti of Africa, children develop a sense of unity, cooperation, and love; his own family background instilled division, competition, and hostility. Is this saying too much for the Mbuti and not enough for a British privileged class? One gets suspicious when reading about the Mbuti ritual of adolescent transformation leading to sexual development that is physically, intellectually, and spiritually positive in contrast with Turnbull's Westminster high school experience. Even if the latter repressed the spiritual aspects of adolescence, is it the rule that modern societies fail to open adolescents to spiritual development? In his section on youth, Oxford University appears in a better light as a milieu for engendering social concern in comparison with African and Indian traditional education; but even here the analogies seem strained.

Beneath this problem of arguing from limping analogies lies the more basic difficulty of Turnbull's approach. His argument presupposes that traditional or tribal societies are qualitatively superior to modern ones. These ancient, small-scale communities, proclaims the subliminal message of Turnbull, are better at teaching social responsibility, holistic awareness, spiritual appreciation, and communal integration. This may be true, but to make the point convincingly requires more than somewhat facile juxtapositions. First, it would call for a more critical appraisal of the premodern societies.

Secondly, the comparative enterprise would demand a more nuanced appreciation of how deeply we technological moderns have undergone changes of consciousness about ourselves and the world. These profound alterations of understanding challenge Turnbull's straight-line comparisons. For example, he recommends for old age a retreat from active involvement in the world after the fashion of tribal sages, witches, and saints. While these roles are important for elderhood's contribution to society, modern social structures may call for less withdrawal and more concerted action by the old at the center of things. Again, Turnbull speaks of the Tibetan practice of turning adolescent sexual energy into spiritual transformation through the young acolyte's attachment to a guru. By accepting at face value this common rationale for celibacy, Turnbull fails to incorporate a modern psychological critique of the acolyte-master relationship, which would disclose other possible motivations for the same ritual. This example further illustrates the point of major differences of consciousness between the modern and the primitive mind. These divergences of understanding are not "only skin deep" as the author asserts. They are at least as broad as Paul Ricoeur's first and second naiveté as ways of interpreting life.

Such reservations do not diminish the book's worth as a thoughtful, creative, and provocative work of cultural comparison. Turnbull's vision of a better society is certainly focused in the right direction. But looking to premodern societies for answers may be less valuable to

HARVEY FIRESIDE *is C.A. Dana Professor of politics at Ithaca College. His latest book is* Soviet Psychoprisons *(Norton).*

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JAMES FINN COTTER *is a professor of English at Mount St. Mary College and the author of* Inscape: The Christology and Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins *(University of Pittsburgh).*

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us than assessing the complex and greatly changed framework of our present understanding of the world at various stages of individual life. From a careful appraisal of the present, we need to project future images of realistic and positive growth phases for individuals and communities.

Correspondence

(Continued from page 450)

from the LCWR and other self-serving, "progressive," "Catholic" organizations. Sisters Mansour, Kane, Kolbenschlag, et al. proceed to redefine obedience according to their wishes so that they can proceed to tear away at the fabric of church unity, while simultaneously thumbing their noses at the Vicar of Christ. One can legitimately ask whether they wish to serve Christ or themselves.

We should at least be grateful that they are not in Catholic classrooms. There is precious little relationship between Sister Kolbenschlag's convoluted theological aberrations and the splendid name of her religious order (Humility of Mary). If, in fact, there are so many malcontents in the ranks of women religious feminists, they are certainly free to exercise the same option as Henry VIII and Martin Luther did. It might be the only intellectually honest thing to do!

WILLIAM F. SCHMITZ

Vocations & fairness

Annapolis, Md.

To the Editors: Most of the issues that arise from the forced resignation of Sister Mansour were well described by Madonna Kolbenschlag [June 17]. The problem most disturbing to Catholic parents, however, was not treated. The issue is simple: what parents are going to recommend a religious vocation to their children after reading how the hierarchy has treated one of the church's most faithful daughters?

Both Sister Mansour's bishop and the papal representative exerted unfair pressure, circumvented her order and her superiors (thereby undermining legitimate church authority), ignored due process, and forced her to unnecessarily choose between two valid commitments.

Moreover, the choice was foisted on her by confrontation, also unnecessary, after she and her order had taken the precaution of seeking, and receiving, permission for her to take a position with the State of Michigan.

To those parents who are aware, such actions by the hierarchy are not new. What I would like the hierarchy to realize is, there is a direct connection between such activities and the decline in vocations. In all probability vocations will continue at a low level until the bishops deal equitably with their flock: a fair system of due process would assist this.

What the bishops must face up to is, whether in the light of their practices and the lack of due process:

- —Catholic parents are likely to recommend a religious vocation for their children?
- —Do the bishops suspect that, perhaps for a long time now, Catholic parents have not been urging their children to take up a religious life (in fact, they might have even discouraged them)?

Because it is important that the bishops no longer ignore the problem I would ask *Commonweal* to run a survey of its readers and ask them questions such as the following:

- —As a parent or a teacher do you recommend the religious life to your children or your students?
- —Has the lack of a formalized system of due process influenced your decision?
- —Has the treatment of Sister Mansour come as a shock to you or did it confirm your previous impressions?
- —To readers who are current or former members of the clergy or of religious orders, have you or your friends experienced treatment from your superiors or the hierarchy that resembles what Sister Mansour received?
- —If you have left the religious life to rejoin the blessed state of the laity, was lack of due process a major factor in your decision?

If the survey could be run and the responses tabulated by early fall (perhaps with the assistance of the National Opinion Research Center), the results could be released for the consideration of the bishops at their next semi-annual meeting in Washington in November.

CHARLES NATHANIEL DAVIS

New awareness

Mount St. Joseph, Ohio

To the Editors: I want to voice my gratitude to you and to Madonna Kolbenschlag for the very timely, sensitive, and thorough analysis of the Mansour case in your June 17 issue.

It is so easy for the emotionality and the conjecturing around the experience to cloud the real issues at stake. I agree with Sister Kolbenschlag's four concerns as possible serious resultants from this case and believe they must be addressed corporately by all of us who call ourselves church in the United States.

Whatever one may believe about the content of the issues involved in this case, it seems imperative that the process used in the church for dealing with dissent and for exercising authority must be marked by that justice and truth which

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the church's own best teachings enjoin upon all of us.

As Sister Kolbenschlag so well states, religious life is integral to the movement of church and state in this country and its historical effects cannot be denied. Hopefully this unfortunate incident, which has stirred the hearts and minds of so many, may be the turning point of a new awareness — an awareness of the very profound and extensive effects and implications of an almost twenty-year serious renewal process for women religious in this country. Many women religious today are prepared, and willing and capable of addressing the deeper concerns of a struggling church and society. They must be taken seriously and allowed to exercise the prophetic role which this generation and culture needs so desperately.

HELEN FLAHERTY, S.C.
President — Leadership Conference of Women Religious

Abortion contradiction

Wheeling, W. Va.

To the Editors: With due respect I believe it is Sister Madonna Kolbenschlag who misunderstands the Mansour case [June 17]. It is startling that Kolbenschlag does not see the obvious contradiction in Ms. Mansour's stance on abortion. Mansour holds that abortion is morally evil, but that she, as head of an agency, should see to it that the state subsidize poor women who wish to procure abortions so that not only wealthier women can have them. That is like a state official saying that he/she finds slavery morally repugnanat, but as long as it is legal in ante-bellum Alabama, he/she must assist poor whites in buying slaves so that not just the rich will have them.

If Mansour is really "unwavering" in her stance against abortion — presumably because abortion means the destruction of innocent unborn boys and girls — would it not make more sense for her to declare her intention to stop the killing of unborn children of the poor, should that be in her immediate administrative power, and then to work to save unborn victims of the rich as well? Incidentally, had that been Sr. Mansour's position, she might have had grounds *vis à vis* church authorities for accepting the agency post under the principle of material cooperation with evil. Of course, had that been her position, she probably would not have been offered the job in the first place.

(MR.) JOHN J. ROCK, S.J.
Department of Philosophy
Wheeling College

A lone woman

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: The article on Sister Agnes Mary Mansour by Madonna Kolbenschlag [June 17] deserves careful reading and wide circulation for presenting an excellent analysis of very complex issues. For thousands of women religious in the United States, Agnes Mary Mansour has become the Rosa Parks of religious women. As the National Coalition of American Nuns put it, "A lone woman stands up to an incredibly powerful institution and simply says, 'No.' "

JEANNINE GRAMICK, SSND

By the numbers

Philadelphia, Pa.

To the Editors: Ernest Evans criticizes my *Real Terror Network* (May 6, 1983), among other reasons, for its preoccupation with "numbers" and comparisons of numbers, and for thus reducing human rights to "the level of statistics." What is the alternative to a careful assessment of numbers? Consistent with his present position, in his review of Claire Sterling's *Terror Network* (Commonweal, Sept. 25, 1981) Evans was perfectly content with her complete avoidance of numbers and total reliance on individual episodes, dramatically related, often based on unverifiable alleged information from intelligence sources. Sterling also ruled off the agenda state terrorism, such as that carried out by Lucas Garcia and Rios Montt in Guatemala, and even the terrorism of all *rightist* groups like the Cuban refugee CMA, the Turkish Grey Wolves, and the Italian Armed Revolutionary Nuclei (authors of the Bologna railway station bombing). Evans failed to point out or criticize this hugely political selectivity.

He asserted earlier that Sterling "has demonstrated the extensive assistance given by the Soviet Union to terrorists" and the importance of terrorism (undefined by Sterling or Evans). Note the use of the word "demonstrated." Evans raised not a single question about the quality of Sterling's sources and proofs. For him this was serious scholarship, not the "rightwing fairy tale" seen by most reviewers. In the *New Republic,* the Irish intellectual and politician Conor Cruise O'Brien devastated Sterling for her gullibility, her naive assumption that anything told her by western intelligence sources is true, and her faulty logic. He analyzed in detail her proof of the KGB domination of the Irish Provos, which he showed to be not merely wrong but also foolish. In March 1982 Sterling lost a slander suit in Paris, based on allegations in her book that Henri Curiel was a KGB agent. These allegations rested as usual on "confidential intelligence sources," but in this case the French courts were given access to French security files on Curiel, none of which showed any KGB connection. This is consistent with the widespread belief that Sterling is a conduit for rightwing intelligence disinformation, and that no rational person should assume that what she says is true. But Evans's only reservation was that perhaps Sterling did not give adequate weight to the "local causes" of terrorism, as opposed to Soviet plotting. Sterling complained that many intelligence services did not accept her Soviet network theory, possibly because of KGB infiltration; but no such reservations were expressed by Ernest Evans.

Besides my preoccupation with "numbers," Evans criticizes my book on the ground that I regard terrorism by revolutionary movements as an "insignificant" issue. I make no such claim, although I point out that the numbers involved in the Sterling cases are small relative to those which she ignores. Evans never tells us how we determine "significance," it is just that numbers are OUT. He asserts, however, that Sterling shows "extensive" Soviet support of terrorists. Isn't extensiveness a matter of

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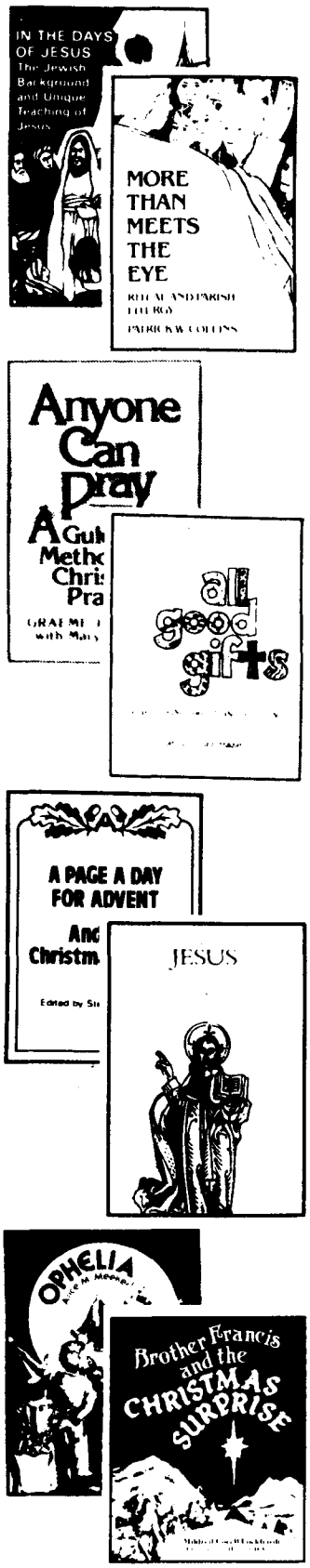
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numbers? If one can say extensive, why is relative extensiveness not meaningful? Are the rightist and state terror ignored by Sterling "extensive" and "significant?" Can the United States be said to be giving "extensive aid to terrorists"? Is Rios Montt a terrorist? In his 1981 review Evans described the United States as opposing terrorism and carrying out a pro-human rights policy. In short, he followed Sterling without question in selecting definitions and vague numbers that made the Soviets the sponsors of terrorism, the United States, supporting Botha, Pinochet and the Guatemalan generals, the antiterrorist force. Ambiguity and a disregard of numbers served there to obscure a political agenda.

My attention to numbers was dictated mainly by the desire to show that people like Sterling were focusing on a select and small group of terrorists for political reasons, to distract attention from other (approved) victims, thereby making it easier to kill them or have them killed. The ones to be killed were in client states, like Guatemala, Argentina, and Chile, where the numbers eliminated since 1970 were greater *in each* than the CIA total for victims of "international terrorists" on a worldwide basis over a longer time span. Having accepted Sterling's principles of selection in 1981, Evans now criticizes my use of statistics, my "body count mentality," on the ground that it may involve "belittling and minimizing the suffering of people under brutal regimes that are 'on our side.' " Is it possible that this is not audacity but merely a reflection of the depth of Evans's bamboozlement?

Evans closes his review with a a reiteration of the idea that a focus on body count and numbers is destructive of effective human rights policies. Admittedly this is a tricky area, but apart from the fact that Evans offers no alternative criteria, he simply refuses to address the issues that I raise. I show that in case after case, major human rights campaigns in the United States are structured by domestic power interests, so that Soviet dissidents and victims in Cambodia and Poland are capable of eliciting intensive coverage and concern; equally or more abused individuals and groups in Indonesia and Brazil are not able to attract sustained attention. I also show that carefully selected "terrorisms" become hot topics at certain phases of history, when, for example, weakening unions or a forward external policy are high on the elite agenda. I also show by many case studies that extreme violence — systematic torture and numerous executions — in client states like Guatemala and Chile is *facilitated and protected* by an aggressive focus on other terrorists and enemy villainy. Finally, I stress that the enemy violence capable of generating sustained coverage in the United States is often entirely outside of our orbit of control, suggesting that the true purpose of the propaganda outpourings is ideological mobilization, not succor of the victims. It is the terror within our orbit and potential control that is kept under the rug. If these points have any validity, discussing them, even with the assistance of "numbers," would seem essential to formulating a meaningful human rights perspective. Evans simply dodges these questions.

EDWARD S. HERMAN

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The author replies:

Mr. Herman's letter is excessively polemical, and hence has had the effect of obscuring my arguments as to why many of the ideas he puts forward in his book are dangerous to the cause of human rights. So, in light of his letter, I would like to make a few comments on these arguments.

He asks me what alternative I have to the use of statistics and numbers in human rights work. I never said I was opposed to the use of statistics and numbers *per se* but a specific statistical technique; i.e., the "politics of body counts." This technique consists of analyzing the human rights records of different countries by "counting the bodies," comparing the totals, and then declaring who is the worst offender.

This "politics of body counts" is immensely destructive of human rights because it leads people to minimize the suffering of the people in those countries that are "on our side." (It is, of course, very hard to say who is "on our side" these days. Do the Soviets have Argentina "on their side" after the Falklands war? And whose side are countries like Poland and Iran on these days?) Anyone doubting this minimization of suffering has only to read some of the articles by people on the left about Cambodia (Remember all those critiques of "exaggerated" reports from "unreliable" refugees about mass graves and torture centers in Cambodia?) or some of the articles by neo-Cold Warriors about Argentina (Remember all those accounts about how there was some violence after the 1976 coup, but that it was merely "defensive violence" directed against leftwing terrorists?) Those who belittle the suffering of individuals in one country make it much harder to defend the rights of individuals in other countries.

Perhaps my most fundamental concern about Herman's book is its using the human rights issue in the same way that the new Cold Warriors are. This new generation of Cold Warriors see human rights as an effective tool with which to attack the Soviet Union and its allies. In a similar way Herman is using the human rights issue to attack American domestic society and American foreign policy. If enough individuals cynically misuse the human rights issue the result will be that most people will start dismissing this issue as a facade concealing hidden political agendas.

ERNEST EVANS

Early seeds

Chicago, Ill.

To the Editors: I found James O'Gara's recollections of the early days of the Catholic Worker in Chicago far more accurate than mine would ever have been [May 6]. I had one important reservation about Mel Piehl's book which I found to be well done. He ignored the CW's stance on interracial justice, which for the 1930s and early 1940s was highly radical, antedating even the Catholic Interracial Councils, Father John LaFarge, the Interracial Review, and, later, the civil-rights movement. The CW masthead, with its black and white workers, boldly proclaimed the Catholic Worker's opposition to racial discrimination and segregation.

The fact that Arthur G. Falls, a Negro physician, was the first "leader" of the Chicago group and its correspondent with the New York-based CW is not to be minimized. In those years the CW planted many seeds which flowered during the civil-rights era two decades later.

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